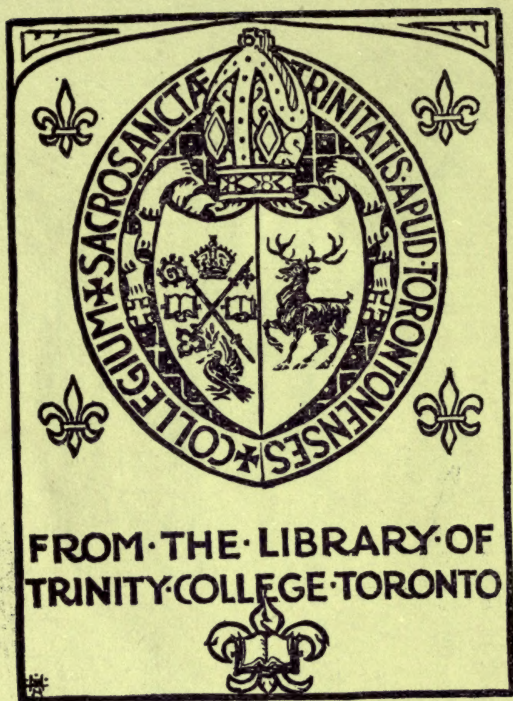


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ORDINATION ADDRESSES



Walter L. Goltz, Ph. Sc.

Jus. E. W.
Woxon.

ORDINATION ADDRESSES

BY

THE RIGHT REVEREND
WILLIAM STUBBS, D.D.

LATE BISHOP OF OXFORD

EDITED BY

E. E. HOLMES

HON. CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH; VICAR OF SONNING
FORMERLY DOMESTIC CHAPLAIN TO THE
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PREFACE

ON March 22, 1901, Sir Thomas Barlow passed the sentence of Resignation on the Bishop of Oxford.

After accepting the verdict, the Bishop definitely decided to leave Cuddesdon at midsummer, and began to arrange his MSS., and to select from a mass of unique material certain Lectures, Addresses, and Sermons which he hoped to revise and to publish during his enforced rest. On April 22 the end came quite suddenly—suddenly even to those about him, all (save, perhaps, the Bishop himself) anticipating that rest from work, and freedom from worry, would prolong his life for some time. Fortunately, the Bishop had already set aside some MSS. for publication, and had instructed me, in the event of his death, to consult Mr. Hassall, his old pupil at Christ Church, in regard to the Lectures, and had further given me a discretionary power as to publishing his remaining papers. The Lectures are in Mr. Hassall's hands, and a selection from the Ordination Addresses is

now published practically as they were written—written, generally, straight off at a sitting, after perhaps more thought than would be given to apparently greater writings.

It would be an impertinence for me to do more than express the hope that the Addresses may be of use to a larger circle than those who heard them, and may exhibit one of the less known aspects—almost bewildering in their variety—of the Bishop's life and character.

This volume will, I hope, shortly be followed by one containing the Bishop's remarkable *Visitation Charges*.

E. E. HOLMES.

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ORDINATION ADDRESSES

THE DIACONATE

Or ministry, let us wait in our ministering.—ROMANS xii. 7.

THE ordination of a deacon or deacons alone, apart from the ordination of priests, is so uncommon in most dioceses in these days, that one is rather astonished to find the order of the Church in the rubric at the beginning of the service prescribing a sermon on the duty and office of such as come to be admitted deacons, how necessary that order is in the Church of Christ, and also how the people ought to esteem them in their office. It is on a somewhat free interpretation of that rubric that I am going to say this morning a few words on the subject, in its practical aspect, as contemplated on the present occasion, and, indeed, generally at the present day in our own Church. So I will only advert to the necessity of the institution as a partial fulfilment of the original and primitive order of the three-fold

ministry which our Church maintains in its integrity, with only such obvious and superficial modifications as the experience of the ages has brought to us. And I will not say more of the historical origin of the order, as described to us by St. Luke in the Acts, than this, that as it was instituted to relieve the apostles from some portion of the merely ministerial part of their work, it is regarded by our Church as very largely conversant with the ministerial and mechanical working of pastoral service, although not by any means so restricted as in some communities, in which the name of deacon is given to the lay collaborators of the ministry proper. However purely ministerial the work may be regarded, it is still work for which the help of the Holy Ghost is asked and required, and also in itself a step towards the higher work of priesthood and pastorate. It is no use to say more as to what I am not going to say. At the present moment the work of the deacon during his diaconate is to prepare himself for the priesthood and pastorate, in those matters which his office inherits from the original diaconate as first understood, and which are amplified and defined in the fifth question put to the deacon and answered by him, before the laying on of hands, in the words, "I will so do by the help of God." These, as apart from the

service in church, are chiefly two, the instruction of the youth in the Catechism and the visitation of the poor. And it is of these that I shall speak shortly now; and I would do it with such urgency as our present circumstances allow, and as I would say it if there were the candidates alone to hear it. There is, in the first place, a misgiving to be met, that the teaching in school and visitation of the poor is not work of a high spiritual character, and is less intrinsically a part of a clergyman's duty than study, preaching, and divine service in church. Well, the answer to that is that the welfare of the flock is the leading idea of the ministerial work, as it is the leading idea of our Lord's own incarnate ministry; that it is for them that the spiritual mission of the priest is ordained, and that as the atonement of the great High Priest is offered, so, however precious in the sight of God devout service of worship may be, it is for the salvation of men's souls that the ministry was ordained, and that without that close intercourse which school-work and house-to-house visitation involves, the hold of the clergyman on the flock is not maintained, and a very great part of the spiritual side of his ministry is null and void. I say a great part, for it is not all—the intercessory work of prayer is of great and intrinsic value; but even allow-

ing for that, what can be the value of men's prayers for those whom they do not do their best to reach and bring into touch with the great verities that are of the essence of the Gospel of salvation? This consideration duly weighed gives the element of spiritual life and energy to the most secular work that one man can do for another; "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these My little ones ye have done it unto Me." There is no sadder sight or hearing than the celebration of splendid services and the preaching of splendid sermons in places and by persons not in touch with the Gospel work, and no more foolish misapprehension than the idea that such are an approach to adequate pastoral efficiency.

It is well that the deacon in his first year should make himself thoroughly at home in the two ways of which I have spoken. The visitation of the houses of the people is no doubt a matter which demands both tact and a sympathy which may have to work itself by experience into lines that involve a good deal of self-sacrifice, forbearance, and reticence. The self-sacrifice, forbearance, and reticence may be matters that can be learned and faced, if there be the real sympathy to begin with; and the real sympathy will grow and expand as the realisation of the love of the flock is reached,

and the consciousness that we are doing some part of the work of our Lord, trying, at all events, to do it as we think that He would have done it, and as we trust the Holy Ghost is guiding us in will, heart, and habit. We plan the visitation of our districts, not as tract distributors or tax collectors, but as men with a method ; we take care that our visits shall not be mechanically regular, but so frequent and so regular that no house shall be unvisited for more than so many days or weeks. We do not as a rule confine our conversation to the formally religious topics that we may have in common with, or that we would like to urge on the minds, unprepared as they may be, of those with whom we talk ; and yet at the same time, knowing that people have but one heart and one soul, and that the things that lie closest to heart and soul must be made a medium of communication with their real life, knowing that the things natural and the things spiritual lie in them as in all of us, for good or for evil, very closely, nay, identically together ; knowing this, we do try that no visit shall pass away without some good word or thought that may bear fruit in the way of remembrance. But for all that, the great matter to be achieved is the realising of our sympathy with them, and of the hold on them which we are trying to secure for our Lord. So we do come to take a vivid interest, a real vivid interest,

in their circumstances, history, and relations; to realise their identity and individuality with their separate joys and sorrows, their trials, falls, and repentances, their tempers, habits, and modes of looking at things and expressing opinions. And so it may be that we have sometimes to repel rather than to encourage utterances which seem to be religious, and which may be unreal, rather snares than helps, however at the time they may be rightly intended. But the great point to be aimed at is, as I have said, the individualising of care and sympathy; *I know My sheep and am known of Mine.*

There is an exact analogy in the earthly ministry in which our Lord identified Himself in love and sympathy with mankind in preparation for the priesthood of sacrifice, touched with the feeling of the infirmities of those for whom He offers. His example of identification is before us whom He sends as He Himself was sent, that we should know and feel as they do for whom we work. That must be the first lesson of a happy pastorate. It cannot be begun too soon or learned too thoroughly. It has nothing to do with popularity or prominent clerical assertion. You must know every one of your people, men, women, and children, not as units but as distinct personalities and relations; and if you try you will learn to

suffer with them, but you will also learn to rejoice with them, and in your Lord's spirit you will bring Him and them closer together in all things. This I believe to be a true account and an attainable ideal ; and the work of school is an extension on one side of the same principle and method. Unhappily in these days the working of the curate or of the vicar either, in the national school, is encumbered and restricted in ways which may be very necessary, but which it requires no small effort to deal with in such ways as may be conducive to the great end in view. But there is scarcely, I should think, any place or condition of things in which something may not be done. If the interest of school and of the children is in one place helpful in the work of visiting, the interest of the well-visited and friendly home will be, in another place, a ready introduction to the interest of school and scholars ; and so the Sunday-school may always be used even when the day-school is closed to you. But I do not dwell upon this. It is certain that to the ready, willing, sympathetic mind openings will come, on the particular character of which we cannot speculate, and the instincts of those who are cared for will go out towards those who care for them in ways that no formal rules can guide or restrict. Well, these seem simple things for simple people ; lessons that the very common

simplicity in which a young man begins his ministerial work might make easy, or at least make it not hard to learn ; simple they are, but they are part of the discipline in which the work of the Lord Himself is done. I am, He says, among you as one that serveth, as he that serveth ὡς ὁ διακονῶν ; He came not to be ministered unto but to minister, not διακονηθῆναι, but διακονῆσαι. He Himself had one thing to learn,—obedience by suffering, how to work for men, by being made like unto them ; the great High Priest qualified for His priesthood by the identification of Himself—I cannot repeat it too often—with those whom He learned to know by serving them. Well may the apostle put the lesson to us as he does—“Let the same mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus,” whose humiliation was in the choice of the lot that made Him like those He came to save. We are to translate our great example into the language of our lives and times and duties. And it ought not to be a difficult translation even when it means the trying to become all things to all men, that by some means we may try to save some. We have enough elements of likeness to begin with in the knowledge of common temptations, sins, and repentances ; there is no such breadth of difference between us and the very poorest, meanest, most miserable of all those whom we are sent to serve.

We speak of the diaconate as an inferior office ; but it is made great by the dignity of service. He who would be great amongst you, let him be your minister, *ἔστω ὑμῶν διάκονος* ; so He fitted Himself to be our Priest. Lord pardon our assumption in so likening any lot to Thine, but suffer us to try to follow and finish Thy work.

THE ORDINATION QUESTIONS

I

That one and the self-same Spirit.—I COR. xii. 11.

I PROPOSE at these four meetings for evening prayer during this most important week, to say a few words to you on some of the questions which the candidates for the diaconate will be called on to answer at the beginning of the Ordination Service, and which may very well be recalled to the minds of the candidates for the priesthood, that they may review their experience and perhaps see where they need fresh resolution and more special prayer. And this afternoon I will speak of the first two of the questions, which concern the inward movement by the Holy Ghost and the outward order of the Church. You will observe that the two questions concern two different things, although the right answer to the first is or ought to be indispensable to a right answer to the second; the first relates to the voice of the Holy Ghost in your heart, the second to the voice of the Church of Christ in England. If you can answer that

you trust that you are called by the Holy Ghost, you express, I hope, an earnest belief and prayerful conviction of your own sincerity ; if you say, "I think so," to the second question, you express a solemn opinion on a great historical fact so far as it concerns you—and it must concern you in every thought and act of your life as long as that life lasts. We need not debate *how* much more important the first question is than the second ; both are of very great importance, and the second is only second to the first ; that is, the fact that you are moved by the Holy Ghost is only for you, and for the moment, more important than the fact that you are offering yourself to be a minister of the Historical Church of Jesus Christ, founded on Calvary, in the Upper Chamber and on the Mount of the Ascension, and come near to us here and now in the presentment of the Church of England. Both are of primary importance, but if you speak falsely in answer to the first, your answer to the second is of no consequence at all ; if you can honestly and conscientiously say, "I trust so," to the first, then the second has a living and penetrating and heart-touching and inspiring force which cannot be overvalued. I hope that none of you have come here without a firm conviction that you can speak truly the words that are put into your mouths, that you do trust that you are inwardly moved. I wish to put no

exaggerated or exclusive interpretation on these words : the intrinsic force of them needs no exaggeration to bring it home, and I need not weaken it by presuming on your secondary motives as any disparagement. That is, I will not do more than urge you to self-examination to see that this motive is there ; if it is there it must be the leading motive, if it is not there no other will supply its place or make your answer sincere ; but it is quite unnecessary to suggest misgivings. If you are so called then the circumstances of life which help or supplement the motive are not to be set aside as suspected hindrances, only be you sure that you are under no mistake : do not think that special gifts in themselves constitute a call ; do not think that because God has given you eloquence and because you think it a good thing to devote that eloquence to Him that therefore your eloquence is a call ; or because you can take an interest in schools, or because you have a family living and you feel that you would like the duty, that that constitutes a call ; it may be an indication, it may be a smoothing of the way, it may be a qualification for the proper discharge of the task, but it is not the one motive. At the same time, there is no reason that you should look on it with misgiving as if it were a temptation to self-deceit, or something that should be suspected as a hindrance.

Set that aside and look the question in the face ; the question itself supplies the tests of your sincerity. Can you say that you have the earnest desire to serve God for the promoting of His glory and the edifying of His people in this ministry, the desire to offer yourself, entirely, heart and mind, soul and strength, eloquence, learning, means, and tastes to these great ends—the spread of the Kingdom of Christ and the securing to Him of the souls that He died to save ? Do you love Him ? Do you love them ? If you do, then I may say, as the beloved apostle says for me, God dwelleth in you and He will not let you be mistaken in your trust. If you love Him and His people, then you are not suffered to be mistaken as to the voice that calls you, or the motive that stirs you. I must leave it to your conscience. You may have a sincere love both to Him and His, and yet not be called to offer yourselves for this work ; but that very sincere love should hinder you offering yourselves if you know that you are not fit, or if there be anything but a direct and clear call. I can scarcely doubt that you have thought thus much out for yourselves. That being done, look now at the second question. You are offering yourselves to be ministers of Jesus Christ in this English Church—in a historical, legal, established organisation for

the spread of the Gospel, that historical, legal, established organisation being a part of the mystical body of Christ whose members you are. That is what the Church of England claims to be, nothing less : and what you must realise, if you are to be her true ministers. I will not now speak of other communions ; we will not look at the exclusive side, or imply negations ; we will not say that this or that section is not of the body because it says that it is not of the body ; we will not trouble ourselves with what is not, but simply accept what is. This call that you profess to have according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ and the due order of this realm, is this true to you, are you true to this ? Let me warn you ! You cannot look on the Church of England from the outside and be a faithful minister, offered to the service of Jesus within her. You cannot look on her as an interesting piece of historical continuity in which men may be saved as well as in any other ; you cannot view her as one of a lot of communions, having *to you* no other distinction than a slight superiority of gifts, privileges, or prestige. This Church is the presentment of the Church of Christ to you, and you must be prepared to work in her work as the work that Christ Himself sets you. Your position with regard to her and to Him is not a mere attitude, it is a part

of yourself henceforth as it ought to have been ever since your baptism. I put this to you as no exaggeration ; if this consideration be less weighty with you than I put it, you cannot answer that second question as true men ought to do. If you look on the Church of England as less than to you the Church of the living God, then I cannot see that your view of it is more real or attractive than that of a trade's union or co-operative association. It was this that brought you to baptism ; it was this that accepted your full-grown purpose at confirmation ; it was through this that you have eaten and drunk the Body and Blood of the Lord ; it is through this that I am empowered, through the long line of mission and commission from the Upper Chamber at Jerusalem, to lay my hands on you and send you. Beloved, you are bone of her bone, flesh of her flesh, which is the Bride of Christ ; and so you are members of His body who has called you through her. God help us all to see how near all this brings us to Him.

Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this office and ministration to serve God for the promoting of His glory and the edifying of His Church ?

It is not easy, at least I do not find it so, to determine by any generalisation of experiences the normal temperature of the spiritual life, the rate

of pulsation of thorough vitality, the dominant note of the voice of real devotion, the true sincere tone of the conversation which is in heaven. It is not easy, with the utmost caution and the deepest charity, to do this in judging of others ; happy are we if we are seldom called on for the judgment. But what about ourselves ? How is it with you, who to-day are bound, in the merest obligation of common sense, as well as in the most critical moment of spiritual exaltation, to prove your own selves ?

We talk of temperament ; with various temperaments the sensations, the emotions, the permanent energies of religious motive, have varied operation : we talk of experiences, the adventures of a stimulating or a quiet life ; the variety of incidents, crises, risks, and opportunities, the varied realisation of special providences : we talk of the local tones and influences of society, education, line of study and power of self-abstraction, things inside and outside. Then we consider what, in the case of the great saints, we cannot doubt to have been, and to be, an ecstasy of devotion ; and what, in the case of countless ordinary people, not less dear to the Lord than those of a very placid and unostentatious quietude, a very reticence of sincere sanctification : we question who can in reality aspire to that ecstasy, who can be wisely content

with that unsensational simplicity ; and we ask, Is the ecstatic concentration of the saint, as it is described to us, anything more than a vivid realisation of what must be the habit of those, who, loving Him, their Lord, above all things, are ready to count all things loss for the excellency of Christ Jesus ; is the steady simplicity of the other a real fulfilment or an approach to the fulfilment of the idea of those who are to reproduce the life of the Lord Jesus in their own ? With one it is, " Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest ; " with another, " Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief. " With one, " Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee. " With another, " All I know is that I love nothing more than Thee. " Yet it is to all alike the command and the acceptance, Be it how it may, follow thou Me. Yes, and we will. And so we are tempted to ask what is the good of questioning ; am I risking, on the one hand, making the soul of the righteous sad whom the Lord hath not made sad, and, on the other, of countenancing the sinner in the error of his ways ; discouraging one man because he cannot rise to the higher ideal, and encouraging another in the conviction, if he ever thinks about it, that there is no need for him to try ? Yet we are sensible ourselves that, often and often, the promise of *eternal glory* which the Lord makes to His own (and are not we His own) seems to be

something so far above our power of conception that we cannot even say that we desire it ; that we should, in our highest conscious aspiration, be well satisfied if we were assured of peace eternal among the meanest of His least in the kingdom of heaven ; that as for the glory, all we can say is, that we desire to be empowered to desire what the infinite love of the Father thinks fit to offer. And so we wonder, and sometimes, God help us, even question the sane sincerity of many devout persons and devout expressions of feeling, that rise beyond our own, apparently on no higher starting-point and on no more distinct revelation of truth, or more ready apprehension of the revelation, than we possess ourselves. Does it not sometimes occur to us again that the language of hymns and of manuals of private prayer are pitched far too high for any ordinary, normal level of congregational use, if the level of ordinary congregations is nearly the same as ours, and their sense of the reality of the language we speak to God at all like ours. Then this tells, as I said, both ways ; we are depressed if we cannot feel the reality, we are tempted to over excitement if we do ; and yet what can our depression or our exaltation have to do with the truth, the reality that is at the bottom of all the questioning. Is there a confusion between the functions of head and heart, of nerve

and brain ? Do we not know that, if the question is about our own love of God, no accumulation of evidence about His love will prove our love, no conviction of His love will make us love Him, unless the heart be drawn to Him ; and so, too, no amount of feeling on our part, no desire to find in Him that which shall content all aspirations after love, can prove a single article of faith, without a conviction of the objective truth in which those aspirations are to find their realisation.

There are things about which there is no question, in reality, things about which the only subjective question is whether they are presently and consciously real to us : the sense of sin, the infinity of divine love, the fear of death, the readiness of access to Him who can save ; and, alas ! also the weakness of our own purpose, the variability of our conscious appreciation, the uncertainty of our maintenance of the standard, I have set God always before me ! Let not your heart be troubled.

I often think what a blessed lesson our Collects give us, and how wisely we might make their standard the standard of our appreciation ; if we can make real to ourselves their cry for help, and the sense of necessity, and the humility of desire, and the conviction of rightful claim, and the consciousness that we need to be lifted higher before

we can desire, as it should be desired, the plenary conviction of the love of God for us: are not these cords of His drawing, prayers which He longs to grant, expressions of desire which He wants to make grow in us that He may meet them, and so train them towards the even higher things which it has yet to enter into our hearts to conceive of? As lessons I should place them higher than the *Imitatio Christi*, abundant as are the teachings of that blessed book. So, after all, is not the reality of prayer, its freedom, pleasantness, sense of absolute reliance, and consciousness of the sympathy of Him that hears it, one of the most helpful determinants of the question in our own case: and who art thou that judgest another? Yet even in prayer we vary, even in our most unmistakably sincere prayers we sometimes lose the consciousness of earnest desire, even in the purposed devotions that, for no conceivable end except to make our desires known to Him, we should ever think of performing, we stray from Him. Well, He is greater than our heart, and is pleased when He sees that we have not crushed out, or turned away from, or quenched that desire to pray which must be the first work of His spirit within us.

Now let me, without suffering these thoughts to depress any of you, just look at the passage

in the Ordination Service, which requires a reference to what I have called the normal condition of spiritual vitality, neither overpressed nor underestimated—the first question that is put to the candidates for the diaconate, “Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon you this office and ministration to serve God for the promoting of His glory and the edifying of His people?” Mark the question well. It differs from those to which it leads up and which follow from it. Do you trust—then do you think, then do you believe, then will you do? But first—do you trust: not even have you been truly called. Are you inwardly moved? No. Do you trust? Try and see whether your consciousness of the sense in which you will, say, “I trust so,” is one that has a firm basis and a prospect of continued reality. Mark you, it is to bind your whole life, the obligation which you confess; how can you be quite sure? The question simply stated must be so stated, as it would be in any other circumstances in which you have to ask yourselves, Am I doing, purposing, or promising what the Holy Ghost is helping me to do—doing, purposing, or promising, *i.e.* in plain English, what I humbly trust to be right, and to be the thing which God would have me do? for that which is right must be that which God would

have me do, and no man can do that which God would have him do, unless God inwardly moves him to do it, and makes it outwardly as well as inwardly possible for him.

“I trust so.” At what pitch, with what intensity, with what force of conscious purpose, what special form of experimental conviction can you say it? You vary in answer; as I have been saying; as most of us are continually feeling; as the history of the calling of the several apostles may illustrate. The inward moving of the Holy Ghost, like the outward invitation of circumstance, opportunity, and emergency, acts in each severally as He will: to some it may come like a thunderbolt of converting force as it came to St. Paul on his way to Damascus; to another in the midst of life of active business, as to St. Matthew at the receipt of custom; to another as the voice of a friend, a kinsman, or companion, as to the fishermen of the Sea of Galilee; to another as the very simple and natural consummation of discipline and training by which you were from your first childish consciousness led on to determination which to-day you are to express in the words of trust. It does not follow that I should expect from all, or that He who sees your hearts should look in all for exactly the same form of manifestation. It is not well that you—some of

you—should be depressed because you cannot see in yourselves the exaltation or the tension that you cannot but see in some of your companions ; it is not well that any one should judge of the reality of that tension and underrate it because of the variety of the aspect. “I trust so” ; I believe and hope that I am doing that to which God calls me. I trust that the Holy Ghost has moved and is moving me ; I trust that He will help me to sustain my purpose and to do my duty. It is *trust* indeed : I cannot be said to know the work that lies before me ; it may well be that if I knew it I should shrink from it. Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. I think that my whole life will have to be a revelation of new experiences in the way of learning to do my office and ministration to serve God for the promoting of His glory and the edifying of His Church. I am not satisfied with my quantum of zeal, or my quantum of earnestness, or my quantum of discretion (all the better, by the way, that you should not be satisfied). I am not sure that I have the burning love of souls that I have heard that some men have ; I am sure that I have not the courage to rush into the fray, into the battle, without having learned the use or essayed the temper of the weapons that I am taking up. It has yet to loom upon me what may be the way in which the work to which

I am trusting that I am giving myself may be to the glory of God ; it may be that I shall never quite see it ; or to the edifying of His people, what have I to edify His people with ? I know that comparing ourselves among ourselves we are not wise, but I almost think that this is a moment at which of all moments it is the most unwise. "I trust so" does express, for my present purpose and for my hope and anticipation of what is yet to come, the sincerest and the meetest feeling that I am capable of just now.

Do not, please, think that I am attenuating the force either of the question or of the answer. It is the reality, the sincerity, the humility, and self-surrender of the answer, and not the momentary tension of the will, that is in question. You are not asked, Have you had a direct and express revelation of a call of God ? if you have, thank Him for it and be very humble. You are not conscious of a burning and consuming purpose of devotion ; if you are, be very humble. You have not heard the voice, "I will send you far hence unto the Gentiles ;" if you have, be sure it means that you have a great deal more to do to fit yourself for your work. Do not mistake your own frames and feelings for the inward moving of the Holy Ghost, and when those frames and feelings have passed away, question whether the Holy Ghost has moved

you at all ; it is in the truth and reality of the trust that the proof lies to you and to God and your brethren that the inward movement has done its work. It is a growing trust, a progressive movement, an ever-increasing impulse, an ever-widening field and vista of call and duty. It must be so. Men of twenty-three and twenty-four are neither wise with the experience of conflict, victory, and defeat, nor as a rule precocious prophets of the sort of work that God may do through them ; but they can sound their hearts as to the truth of their trust, and they can throw themselves on Him who has so far given them a sense of their high calling. And so it will be, I trust, with all of you ; and I shall ask the prayers of your friends and of the congregation that will hear your reply to the great question, that you may have a full realisation and a permanent justification of your confidence. It will not be the fault of him who has led you thus far, if you have not. God forbid, I say again, that any word that I have said to-day should lead you, or any of those who have heard me, to think that I would be content with a cold or lifeless or formal or reluctant feeling in the declaration of your trust.

I know and believe that to intense and vivid temperaments intense and vivid realisations come of things that to cooler and more logical con-

stitutions come in more prosaic, cooler, and more logical ways. I believe that the Holy Ghost inwardly moves men in and through the machinery of the constitution which He knows them to have, and that the intense and vivid realisation is His work as well as the slower and heavier ; and it may well be, nay, it must be, that they who trust in Him find alike the tone of their true life sustained permanently in all the developments and experiences of their work, severally at His will, and according to the special character of the task He sets them. But what is indispensable in all, and what in its nature and essence is the same with all, is the inward movement to do what He would have you do ; and the trust in that inward moving power is the same. Do you trust that you are inwardly moved ? I trust so. I trust that I am doing right ; I trust that I shall be taught to do my work. I should not be here if it were not so ; I have the purpose : I trust that the strength of my purpose shall be sustained, and my powers grow with the discipline of experience, and opportunities be provided as my capacity for meeting them grows, and my work be acceptable to His glory and the edifying of His Church ; and in that growing trust I offer myself to this office and ministration. So offered, so trying to realise your action, His movement, and His promise and purpose, I, as His

messenger and minister, accept you ; and He will not repudiate my engagement for Him ; He will send you and He will guard you and He will judge you—as His own.

II

Such trust have we through Christ to Godward.

—2 COR. iii. 4.

Do you trust ; do you think ; are you persuaded ; do you believe ; will you do what you have to do, what you are commissioned to do, what in heart and mind you are declaring yourselves desirous and bound to do, with all diligence, with all humility, with all regard to order, and purpose, and duty, and appearance, and courage ? These are the promises which, as candidates for the ministry and priesthood of the Church, you who are to be ordained this morning will make, the promises which require an entire devotion, not of blindness, nor ignorance, nor mere servitude, but of clear, or approximately clear, apprehension of what you bind yourself to, and the reasons, grounds, motives that combine to put you in the present position ; reasons, grounds, motives that are defined in the four or five declarations which precede the vows of diligent willingness. Do you trust ; do you think ; do you believe ; are you persuaded ? Then . . . Will you do what you trust, what you think, what

you believe, what you are persuaded, that you have to do? I do not know that we need go into any minute psychological analysis of these terms: to English minds they speak for themselves, in language of the definiteness of which we can scarcely have a misgiving; and so do the particulars of the promises that follow in the consequential engagements, the promises of diligent service, of diligent individual care, of diligent and discreet conversation, of reverent obedience, and of the maintenance of peace in the flock committed to you.

But it may, I think, be of some use to note further the words of the answers which you are told to make, if you can, to these comprehensive questions. I trust so, I think so, I do believe, I will, I will do so by the help of God, I will do so, I will endeavour myself, the Lord being my helper; and again, I am so persuaded and have so determined, by God's grace I will apply myself. The trust in the fact of the inward moving by the Holy Ghost, which is the first profession in the first stage of examination, runs through the whole tenor of the resulting declarations and undertakings, and the Bishop in the closing words of the interrogatory of the candidates for the priesthood, accepts their offering as of God's inspiration, "Who hath given you the will to do all these things," and in a form

of benediction declares the action of His master in respect of them, "Grant you strength and power to perform the same that He may accomplish His work that He hath begun in you." It is all of the grace of God, all of His inner and outer working, the beginning, continuing, and completion of His purpose. What then do the differences of the forms of the several declarations imply, but your consciousness that in mind, heart, spirit, purpose, and strength, energy and perseverance, you are realising the fact of God's presence in you, with you, and about you. Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost? These are extremely solemn words, but they are words the import of which it is as dangerous to attenuate as it is to exaggerate, quite as dangerous to exaggerate as it is to attenuate. God forbid that we should do either; discourage the man who comes coolly and circumspectly to the profession of the ministry as to a good and useful and godly manner of life, but does not profess an unlimited enthusiasm for the work of which he has had no taste of experience; or suffer the emotional aspirant to make too much of his present feeling and leave him unwarned of the peril of the rebound or of the relaxation of overstrained nerve and power. It may even be that the action of the higher-strung temperament has the more serious perils in reaction, as it has less consciousness of

the need of growth and experience. Nor can we lay down one universal rule, or fix an invariable degree of the temperature of the will. The Holy Ghost inwardly moving does it severally at His will, in this as in all other of His godly motions. The Saviour, in calling His disciples, invited the rich young man, and the man who asked to go and bring His father, as well as His kinsmen who were fishermen, from their nets, and Matthew, the publican, from the receipt of custom.

The test of the inward call is to us, at all events to most of us, the willingness to obey it; so it was the test of even St. Paul's astonishing conversion and mission, the willingness to do what He who called him and who calls us would have him to do, and the final test of it is in the accepted and concluded evidence of a devoted life. Your trust at this moment, that you have been inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, is shown by your presence here, as well as by the verbal profession you will make or have made in the Ordination Service; and perhaps in no two of you are the circumstances, or the reality and vividness of the consciousness, quite the same. Most certainly your experience of the work which your Lord will allot you, as parish priests or university teachers or schoolmasters, or it may be missionaries, or in other capacities in which clergymen are made

useful—your experience of the work assigned you will be as varied as the circumstances in which you offer yourselves to-day; and to this offer doubtless all the previous occasions and influences of your life have combined to lead you. I would not then lay down, for a condition of this trust, any terms different in nature from those in which, in all matters in which we look for divine guidance, we look to be guided; although the work to which you trust that you are moved is a work that has especial responsibilities, dignities, privileges, trials, and rewards, and an especial relation to your Lord's work and sympathy: As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. Are you willing, do you trust, trust in Him to help you to realise the inward movement and to work it out, to serve God for the promoting of His glory and the edifying of His people? Are you willing to devote yourselves?—if you are, have no doubt about the inward moving. It is He that worketh in you and about you; and He will never leave you alone, although it may well be that He will train you by varied successes and disappointments; it is in Him that you trust, not in the vividness of your own feelings, nor in the ups and downs of your own efforts and their results. O Lord, in Thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded. No, He will not. He seeketh and judgeth.

Then comes a question and answer of more easily attested character. The element of trust is in it, but the appeal is to a less complex form of mental appreciation; do you think, think *in your heart*; think not only of certain theological and historical considerations touching the order of the Holy Catholic Church representing the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the due order of this realm, the national and historical system for the working of the Catholic Church according to Christ's law in England: do you think that in your heart you can say that you are willing to become a minister of God in this Organisation? Are you truly called; do you think in your heart that you are?

Surely this question demands of you not only a study of the history and law of the Church, but an ascertaining and thorough conviction of your own loyalty to the idea; and more than to the idea, the facts and conditions in which you realise it. This consideration is very necessary for these days in which, from diverse and contrariant points of view, the nationality of a Church is regarded as becoming inconsistent with its catholicity, and the catholicity of the Church itself evaporated by the processes of sentimental assumption and philosophic doubt. And it is a matter on which the sons and servants of the Church of England should have no misgivings of their own, and

should qualify themselves manfully to hold their own in their questionings with others. This is the organisation by which we have been brought within the direct action of the grace of Almighty God, in all the ways in which, by sacraments, ordinances, education, training, and discipline, we are brought within that direct action. No more and no less do we claim for it ; but that much we do claim, and to that much at least we commit ourselves when we profess our membership. To the true call that comes to you through this Church, you are going to declare that you have listened, and, by your presence as candidates, intimate that you are prepared to answer. It is not to the purpose just now to remind you of the other ways in which this declaration, "I think so," will be developed and safeguarded ; your promise to obey your ordinary, the oath of canonical obedience, your licences, and other more and less spiritual sanctions with which it will be brought home to you. But I will sum it all up in the word loyalty—the true-hearted, courageous, affectionate, patient identification of yourself with the Church ; not as outsiders, not as critics, not as free lances, not as auxiliaries, but as bone of her bone, flesh of her flesh ; and so very distinctly and faithfully as members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. "Such trust have we through Christ to

Godward ;" not of our sufficiency, but with and through our experience of living history, of troubles, trials, humiliations, and victories, in which we may well say, "What He doeth we know not now, but shall know hereafter." When the joyful gladness shall come even to us, and the trust that we have had in Him shall be proved to Him by our faithfulness, as His trust in us is proved by our deliverance.

"I think so"—a very simple, straightforward answer, that becomes simple, straightforward men ; but an answer that, so interpreted, is worthy of the glory of wisdom "that meeteth such in every thought ; for the very true beginning of her is the desire of discipline, and the care of discipline is love, and love is the keeping of her laws, and the giving heed to her laws is the assurance of incorruption." It may be that God has other ways in which He leads other people ; but the way in which He has brought us is this way, and we will be faithful, as we trust Him to keep us. "He that hath ears to hear let him hear."

In the same trust, beloved, you must hear and answer the next question : do you believe ? This is another question, and another answer, about which the controversies of recent years have clouded the atmosphere of faith ; and yet faith is the evidence of things not seen, and belief is

of things that are not susceptible of mathematical demonstration. It is the word of God in the Bible, not the word of man, the spirit rather than the letter, the revelation of eternal life, not the mere narrative of the ways in which it has come to us, told by men who, when they wrote, were growing slowly into the realisation of that which, not having seen, they were preparing the world for. We believe that the Holy Scriptures contain all the doctrine necessary to salvation through Christ our Lord, and as attesting that doctrine we truly believe them, trusting in Him by whose inspiration, according to the measure of His disposition and distribution, we recognise that their writers wrote. We accept them as testimony to that which they are meant to prove ; and we learn what they are meant to prove from the teaching of our Lord Himself and His apostles. We do not use them as a stock of words, sayings, or even facts, out of which we may create a cosmogony, or a paradox of history, or an infallible treasury of arbitrary occasional oracles, a set of *sortes* to determine a choice of chances : " In them ye think that ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of Me." Most wonderful, most beautiful, an infinite treasure to those who trust. God help me and you to trust them : and, through all difficulties, the false theories and the true criti-

cisms, the true theories and the false criticisms (for all are from time to time confusing to the man whose trust is not fixed on the Lord Jesus, the centre and key of the discipline of the word), may He keep us faithful, even with the blessing that St. Thomas evoked from Him at the first, "Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed."

And so we come to the last question or series of questions and answers. *Will* you? Will you do? Will you diligently do, will you apply your diligence to the ministration which, in the conditions we have considered, you are pledging yourselves to? Will you? Your whole life from this day forward is to be the test of your answer, the proof of the trust in which alone you can compass the answer. Will you? do you really mean to try? I am sure you do. We could not have got so far as this unless you did. I hope most sincerely that you have prayed for the inspiration of your purpose, as well as for the acceptance of it; inchoate and, it may be, short-sighted as, as yet, it must be. You have studied the duties to which you are to bind yourselves, of reading and meditating and praying, of visitation, of ministration in and out of church, of faithful readiness, of diligent preparedness, of constant attendance, of loving and charitable treat-

ment, of individual devotion, of humble self-surrender. These things, some of them at least, I have tried to put before you as they present themselves to me in the preparatory work of this week. Will you try? I am sure that you mean it; but, oh, make sure of your trust in Him from whom alone the will, the holy desire, and the good counsel, and the just work proceeds. You mean to try. It is a good beginning, and perhaps, now, it is not well to urge you to look too far ahead; it is a beginning, and only in the firmness of the trust in which you make it can it approach the dignity of being half the battle. Will you be able to maintain it, will you keep it up, diligently; how can you, or how can I reckon on such sustentation of faithfulness? It is this purpose of service that every day of the rest of your lives will test and try; and it is the trust in which you make up your minds to face it, that day by day and hour by hour, in word and in act, you have to pray your Lord to sustain in you.

The struggle against the weariness of exhausting work, the disgust of commonplace or even repulsive society, the frequency of disappointments which will come where the hope has been the highest, and the failure makes the heart so very, very sick; disappointments with yourselves too; the very temptation of success, the desire of change,

the countless snares of temptation into which the fairest ways of usefulness open up so many by-paths ; the restraint of organised work, the strange and puzzling vicissitudes of the common life, the clouds that arise even between the most faithful servant and the all-faithful Lord, the perils of the position of teacher and guide, the heavy responsibility of the pastor and watcher—will you, can you face these ? Much more, too, that I scarce dare think about for you ; only pray. Will you persevere ; will you be able to keep it up ? Well, I say now, as I shall say again by-and-by, Almighty God, who hath given you this will, grant also unto you strength and power to perform the same, that He may accomplish His work which He hath begun in you, through Jesus Christ our Lord : not that we are sufficient of ourselves to do anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God, and such trust have we through Christ to Godward.

III

Do you unfeignedly believe all the canonical scriptures of the Old and New Testament ? I do believe them. This is the third question put to the candidates for the diaconate in the Ordination Service—a question suggestive, undoubtedly, to all who wish to answer it truly, of many other questions, of

knowledge, of purpose, of faith, of mental analysis, and of the proportion of historic evidence. What do I mean by believing? In what belief does my action rise to the dignity of faith; in what sense am I professing my belief; in the sense of the Church that puts the question, or in a sense which my conscience, informed or uninformed, prescribes to me as real, to myself at all events, and therefore as a standard by which, if I were allowed to judge, I should judge of other men's beliefs? And if my belief is to be a belief of faith, "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," with what measure of this faith can I lay hold on the whole body of canonical scripture and declare my confidence, a confidence in which I would live and die, in the minutiae of the record, its details of physical cosmogony, its dates and pedigrees, its continuous array of the miraculous and angelical agencies, its history of wars and relations of the chosen people with the outside nations and empires, whose records, after thousands of years of burial, are now sprung to life and voice again; the very formation of its canon, and the allotment to distinct persons and eras of the authorship of the books which compose it? Can I say that my apprehension of these things is of the nature of belief, that my belief exercised upon any one of them, or on any distinct view about

them, is of the same kind and the same measure as my belief in the articles of the Creed, on which belief I am living so as to prove that I hold them to import the title, through Jesus Christ, to eternal life—that I believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him ?

Now first compare the words of the question I have read, with the corresponding words of the office for ordination of priests, and the seventh of the articles of religion, in which the language used is clear and brief. Both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only mediator between God and man, being both God and man. The ordination question asks, “Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ ?” “will you instruct your people in them ?” “will you do your best to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God’s word in them ?” “will you read and study them diligently, and frame your life and family life by the doctrine of Christ, according to the rule of the same ?” I put all this very shortly, as so much at least must be clearly before your minds during these days ; that is the sum of the sense in which you may interpret the first question according to the *intentio imponentis* : do you believe the

Holy Scripture as the word of life ; as containing, in the Old and New Testament, the revelation of the purpose and work of Almighty God through Jesus Christ our Lord ?

I think that that is the safe and legal interpretation, but I am well aware that it is not by itself sufficient to cover all the ground which I have tentatively indicated. For it is quite clear that Holy Scripture contains a good deal that only by very indirect construction we can conceive to be an integral part of the revelation of Jesus, and with regard to which he would be a very bold man indeed who would say that he realises in it any distinct relation to the Gospel of our salvation. Your own memories will at once supply you with instances of small minutiae of record as to which you cannot see any inkling of spiritual connection ; as, for instance, supposing the wars with the Philistines to be an important part of the training of the chosen people for the state and position in which the Word, the Christ, should come to them, to His own, and not to be received of them, how should the detail of the Philistines going out by the passage of Michmash add anything to the body or contribute anything to the proof of the revelation ? We see that there are many things of this kind which are to our conceptions irrelevant ; and although we can well believe, and do believe,

that in the contemplation of the Most High there is nothing whatever that is irrelevant, and does not conduce in some way to the fulfilment of His great purpose, we cannot but acknowledge that the relevancy of such incidents is very small contrasted with the greater issues and grander steps of development about which we are told nothing at all, earnestly as we would desire to trace them. And these small points, quite as much as the great cosmic operations which, as detailed to us in the Book of Genesis, and as interpreted by the discoveries of modern science, fall into the class of poetic or traditionary illustration, rather than dogmatic teaching—these, small and great alike, throw us back upon the idea of the gradual character of the Revelations we believe in, and of the possibilities and peculiarities of the agencies which He put thus far within our reach, by written record of men inspired.

The Scripture of the Old Testament is the whole historic literature of the chosen people; framed by men inspired by the Holy Ghost, as far as the inculcation of the law and promise of God from time to time were to be revealed; but we do not imagine either that every detail of their writings was so inspired as to keep them from all error, or that everything they wrote was equally matter of revelation. Far otherwise. We cannot

but believe that their language, even at the highest grade of inspiration, was and must be language intelligible to those who wrote and read, and therefore limited and conditioned by their intelligence; and the story which they told such as would be possible to carry tradition from generation to generation, with—as in all history—variations and aggregations and inconsistencies of detail which may amount in non-essential things to contradictions.

Nothing but a theory of verbal inspiration which the Church has not asked of us, could, under the conditions of divine teaching, through the lawgivers, historians, and prophets of the Old Testament, preclude the existence of such inconsistencies, which the growing criticism of generations far ahead would find its work in readjusting, and, as we say, rectifying and reconciling with the new materials that language and historic discovery find for us.

It is of no use for us to speculate that the Almighty might have chosen other ways of signifying His will to us—of course He might; nor can we limit the methods by any theorising of our own as to how He could have done it best, and with the least strain on faith; or how and why faith should come into the operation at all, when it might have been done by seeing and hearing, in one of the countless ways of His versatility, the

wonderful counsels of His right hand. It must suffice us that He did choose this way of dealing with us, and that He suffered the revelation of His purpose to be weighted by the powers and possibilities of the men and times that He chose. It may have been of the necessity of His conditions that the message of life could only be continued and realised in and by means and methods that carried more of temporal and secular interest to a temporal and secular people, like the chosen race, at their best, and at their worst. And this is always to be remembered, that the revelation of God came to a people that did not much care about it, whilst they were living in the very discipline that it was laying on them; and it came not through astrologers, ascetics, or philosophers, but through those whom God appointed as His lawgivers and prophets, as He chose, from all sorts and conditions of life.

However, granting all this, there still remains the consideration, which cannot be left out of our sight in these matters, and which I have mentioned before. We cannot, we cannot possibly, eliminate miraculous and angelical operation from the history of the Old Testament. We cannot look at the Bible history as one that can be divested of miraculous manifestation; we cannot reduce that miraculous manifestation to terms of psychical subjectivity, or ways of relegating unusual pheno-

mena to supernatural agency, when more careful appreciation would have discovered them to be natural. There is no way of making the history of the Bible non-miraculous ; the direct agency of God is a primary condition of the simplest apprehension of it. It works in, and through, and to miracle culminating in the greatest of all miracles, without which the Gospel falls into the mere limbo of pious deceptions by men themselves deceived—the miracle of the Incarnation, of the Resurrection, and the Ascension of the Son of God. “Why should it be thought incredible among you that God should raise the dead?” Why incredible, when the history of one nation was full of providential guidings, and positions and interpositions, quite inconsistent with what were regarded as natural law in the growth and rise and fall of peoples? Why incredible in the view of the history of a people which, for the next two thousand years after St. Paul asked the question, has seen, through experience, the complement of what went before. “Hath God dealt so with any nation?” If this element is to be eliminated from the Old Testament, how much more goes with it, we do not dare to calculate, we would not wish to think.

But for all that, we do not value or regard all recorded miracles alike. I do not imagine that in these days in which the place of the earth in the

solar system is fixed on a hypothesis mathematically unimpugnable, the most conscientious believer would assert it as a matter of faith, that when the sun stood still over Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, the course of this world was essentially altered ; and yet that essential alteration remained unrecorded in the books of the nations, whose first and most ancient steps of knowledge were in the science of the stars. And that is a test illustration to our faith. We should as soon think of reconciling the anomaly by the variations of clocks and watches, and the computation of true and mean times as we do in travelling by land or by sea. Of such it is absurd to speak seriously. But, in fact, we know that we believe in various things with various kinds and degrees of faith. We believe in the daily quotations of the Stock Exchange with a belief different in kind from that with which we receive the forecasts of the meteorological department. We believe in the doctrines of the Apostles' Creed with a belief very different from that with which we believe the records of St. Paul's journeys, though we have no doubt about the correctness of the details. And, further, we know by experience that the acceptance we accord to the faithful record of chroniclers and historians may be very different from the negative or suspensory creed with which we regard their

illustration and interpretation of the things which they believed themselves to record truly.

Analysis, I may say, is an important element in the comparative treatment of experience and analogy. An historian of the eighth, ninth, down to the thirteenth century, records the current of history with names and dates of incontrovertible authority ; and we believe in him so thoroughly that we could risk a great deal on his exact accuracy. And the same man, on the same page that he gives us an essential date or decisive particular, will tell us a miraculous story of something that he saw with his own eyes, which we should never think of accepting as possible, and the narration of which we can only welcome with the kind assumption that the man has told us what he thought he saw, and that he himself believed that what he saw was what he told us that he saw. Of analysis of such record a great deal has at different times been written, and the accepted conclusion as to the phenomenon is, I think, that such episodes constitute no objection at all to the credibility of the author who has introduced them ; rather, as being the specialities or marks of idiosyncrasy of a sincere writer of limited and, it may be, perverted intellectual insight, they add an element of credibility to the acceptance of faith in so ingenuous an exposé of his own weakness.

Well, we say we believe that he thought he saw something of the kind ; he lived in an atmosphere in which such things were of daily contemplation, doubtless he longed to believe it true, and as doubtless something occurred which he could in such a frame and atmosphere so interpret. But this is a very different thing from believing him or his story. I mention this, however, not for a moment intending a parallel between the most apparently useless and inconsistent of the Old Testament miracles and the fabled miracles of the mediæval saints ; rather to point out that the intermixture of what is incredible to us is no bar to the acceptance, as certain, of that which is credible on the same evidence, and then to make the distinction of the kind and degree of faith which we give to different sorts of narration. I do not say that analysis is always, or indeed ever, easy or perfect, or in many points safe and trustworthy. To some things we pledge our belief on the issues of life and hereafter ; to some we accord our assent as believing them to be quite true, although, if they were not, it would matter very little to any practical purpose for us ; to some we give just the nod of assent. Well, I suppose he meant to tell the truth, and thought he saw what he said he did.

I could not dwell on this were it not that I see, in various regions of modern criticism, an inclina-

tion to shut out such a consideration, and to dogmatise about the credibility of authorities, on theories which disregard its equity and cogency ; and so the hearts of the simple are shocked and averted, and the peremptory judgments of the sciolist are accepted on his own terms ; and so belief is weakened, and the area of faithful acceptance minimised, and the cry comes, How little need I believe to justify myself in saying that I believe at all.

It is very possible, very probable, that some such questionings as I have referred to have presented themselves to some of you. Let me add one counsel. Believe in the Lord Jesus with all your heart, believe in His word and His promise ; put your whole trust and confidence in Him, ready to stake your eternal life on His truth and faithfulness, *but* remember that faith is not sight, and the methods of proof to which faith is amenable are not the methods of mathematical analysis. You may be as certain of the articles of the Creed as you are of the proofs of Euclid, but the certainty is not the same sort of certainty, and no intelligent being will look at the promise of eternal life as he looks on the forty-seventh proposition of the first book, which is, as you probably remember, one of the most beautiful theorems of the whole body of the elements. There is faith, but it is not the sub-

stance of the things hoped for, or the evidence of things not seen. In the field of doctrine, of spiritual faith, resting on the word of Christ and His finished work, both the nature of the faith and its hold on the things with which it is confident, its earnestness, its patience, its tolerance, the agency of the Blessed Spirit individually quickening, and through the voice of the Church defining the articles that are necessary to the true appreciation of the revelation of God in the face of Jesus Christ, are the key to all difficulty that we wish to overcome. He will guide you unto all truth, all the more intelligently as you seek the way of it, not grudging, or assuming safe infallibility, but showing, loving, working to enter the fulness of that which we earnestly desire to see, and to be justified among the children of wisdom.

IV

THE third and fourth questions addressed in the Ordination Service to the candidates for the diaconate and the second and fifth questions addressed to candidates for the priesthood, concern the relation undertaken or to be undertaken towards the Holy Scriptures. You express your firm belief in them, your purpose diligently to read them to the people, your persuasion that they contain all doctrine neces-

sary for salvation, your promise to teach nothing as necessary that cannot be proved by them, and your purpose to make them your chief study. The last is the point on which I am going to speak now. I am not apprehensive that any of you have offered yourselves here without such a belief, purpose, persuasion, and promise; but I think it very likely that you may have experienced some difficulty or some weakness as to the last point, the study of them. Now nothing can be allowed in excuse for the neglect of this duty: no evangelising zeal, no busy engrossment of good works, no amount even of simple devotion will entitle any of us to a dispensation from it. It must be done, time must be found for it, nothing must be suffered to stand in its way. It is by study of the Scriptures that the simple become wise unto salvation, and that the greatest scholars learn their constant need of fuller progress into perfect knowledge. The study teaches the ignorant that even to them it is given to know, and the wisest that there is very much of which they must still be ignorant. As the revelation of God's will, as the divinely recorded history of experiences which the divine record alone can interpret, as the story of the world's redemption and as containing the rules for its reconquest and restoration, the Holy Scriptures are the Great Guide Book and

treasury of all the ministers of God. On that I need hardly expatiate. The duty of study is as plain as the necessity of it; you ought and you must, by becoming familiar with the language of God, try to become familiar with the spirit that is in the words, so that you shall come to view men, and sin, and righteousness, and your own-selves as with God's eyes; seeing through false excuses, discarding false mediums, casting aside false exaggerations and attenuations, and by sympathy with the Spirit of the Master entering into the true burdens and troubles of His servants in heart and mind. You ought and must try to realise to yourselves the grounds of belief, and the history of the doctrines of grace as the Bible exhibits them. You must learn to bring things new and old out of the good treasure which you are daily amassing within. That is, simply, you cannot teach, or preach, or visit your people to advantage, or maintain your own spiritual health, or render to him who asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, without constant refreshing and sustaining study. Now how are you to get time for that? Some of you are called to work among large populations where there is much demand for service and visiting, and probably much necessary business in the way of teaching or conduct of business. It does seem perhaps exacting

if I were to say to a curate of Crewe or of Birkenhead,¹ You must find time to work every day at your Greek Testament, or at some patristic commentary, or some really standard work in illustration of the Bible ; and by this I do not mean such study as will enable you to pick up taking points for sermons, or mere tricks or dodges for springing surprises on your congregation, or enabling you to pose before them as men who have a great knowledge of things that you have not a great knowledge of, or to quote familiarly fathers and commentators whom you have never read. You will not do that. It is that you may strengthen your own hold on the truth, and perseveringly applying to the letter not only your own natural acumen, but the powerful light of other men's experience, may qualify yourself to speak out of the *heart*, not only out of the head or the fancy, and speaking out of the heart, speak to the heart, and not only to the head or fancy of your people.

The study of the Bible will make men sincere preachers, and, by the grace of God, effective preachers too, but only on the condition that they seek to know it first for themselves and then to give their best to their people. Practically, I think you should secure your time for study by

¹ This Address was also given to Candidates for Ordination at Chester.

early rising. The clergyman's day ought to end at ten o'clock; it is not wise to keep your people out late, or to rob yourselves of the chance of rest by late reading. Early rising, moderately early rising, will give you two hours a day for reading, or an hour and a half for reading and half-an-hour for sermon-writing. You may think this a small allowance for the latter, and to some people perhaps it is too small, but sermons to be preached with effect must be written with consecutiveness, and however hard and long the subjects may be, thought over before you take pen in hand; when you begin to write you should write on straight. A sermon that has taken a week to think out, that has been on your mind during all your visiting,—and your visiting will scarcely fail to bring home to you every week the bearings of a well-chosen text,—a sermon that you have thought out well, will be all the better for being quickly written. That, however, vastly important as it is, is not the point; the point is that you maintain your belief, your intelligence, your sincerity, and the many-sidedness, the thoroughness of your knowledge by careful, prayerful study. This has its great reward in itself—it is purifying and exalting morally as well as intellectually; and it will come, as you give yourselves to it, to have not only the charm which every study faithfully followed has, but an especial charm as it

exercises the highest faculties of mind and spirit on those highest subjects which they are capable of approaching, and for the due contemplation of which they were made. In no study is it more true that to him that hath shall more be given, more power, more insight, more sense of fitting application, more true pleasure as we enter into the higher regions of perfect love and light.

V

THE fifth question addressed to the candidates for deacon's orders, and the latter part of the third question addressed to the candidates for the priesthood, are concerned with the duty of visiting the sick and poor, with a special reference to both temporal relief and spiritual ministrations. This is a matter about which some varieties of opinion exist, and although I myself entertain a very strong and decided opinion about it, as I shall presently say, I am not going to deny that the circumstances of different parishes and sorts of population do considerably vary the application of the rule. I take it to be of the utmost importance in every parish of manageable size that the clergyman should know every member of his flock, should visit every house, and put himself into relation with the interests and sympathies of every family.

I have no respect at all for the view that the minister is to be resorted to only for religious concerns; that it is a mistake for him to make himself too common or too familiar; that it is a waste of his time to spend it in work that can be done as well by district visitors; that he is degraded and his mission disparaged by the risk of his being treated as a substitute for the relieving-officer; that his occasional visits are apt to become mere gossiping calls and the like. I think that even if these risks were common or real, they ought to be encountered, nay, that the unfortunate result ought to be faced, if it is unavoidable, rather than this duty should be imperilled. Of course, in a parish of 1000 people such visitation is simple enough; and I might even go so far as to say that a parish of 4000 people might be handled by a single clergyman so that he should never be a stranger in any house, provided he is willing to devote a regular portion of his time to it, although, of course, the larger the population the more exacting in a compound ratio becomes the demand for visitations of the sick.

And the reason for this will be surely very apparent. It is not that the minister may make himself popular, or even that he may in every case make opportunities of religious influence; it is because he is put in charge of a special flock

by the Great Shepherd who knows His own and is known of them, and who sends him even as the Father hath sent Him Himself, to fulfil His law by bearing their burdens. There must be a real sympathy, and that cannot be without a personal individual acquaintance. The acquaintance may never reach the point of sympathy, sometimes the approach may be repelled, or the intercourse too repulsive to be borne, but without the acquaintance the sympathy cannot become a likeness in any way of the Lord's sympathy, or a very efficient factor in the working of the church. So, however well your parishes may be organised with lay help and district visiting, nothing will dispense the clergyman himself from the duty of which I have spoken. Of course, it requires tact, and patience, and a humility as well as a manliness that will face what has to be faced. I do not think that the custom of visitation should be limited to the families that attend at church, or that call themselves church people; wherever the clergyman can go he ought to go, and wherever he finds a difficulty he ought to spare no pains to overcome it; for very often the very people who present the most obstacles to your knowing them are the people who are best worth knowing, and for whom some sort of social intercourse will be most remunerative both ways.

The great majority of the English people are reserved, and there are many districts in which, from various causes, any new clergyman is an object of guarded suspicion; but also the great majority, whether churchmen or dissenters, will honour the faithful, and humble, and persevering minister. They can see through shams and make-shifts, can sound hollow services, and treat the well-meaning with an irritating patronage, speaking with assumption of superiority of very much that they do not understand; but in the long run they will be won by the man who shows his sincere sympathy with them, and they will never be won by one, however they may run after his preaching, or however proud they may be of his cleverness, who stands aloof from them. Your care, your sympathy, your ministerial sorrows and anxieties, as well as joys and successes, lie not merely in your flock as a whole, but immediately, and as to all efficacious result, in the pastoral work on individuals. Families may be brought to church, children may be brought to church, the sick may be always tended, as aggregates; but the fruit of the work is in the individual result, and that cannot be achieved without immediate contact of man and man. So organisation is a wonderful subsidiary means, but no organisation can supersede personal devotion to the flock. You may say, If this is to be the rule we

shall have little time for reading and no time for relaxation ; church services, visiting, and reading, how are they to be distributed so that time can be found for all and that there be no undue competition ? Well, there must be an effort : the man who loves his books better than his visits to the poor must deny himself ; the man who prefers his relaxation to his duty is unworthy of the name of Christ's minister. There must be an effort, and a self-denying one, not to speak of the effort that must be made to overcome and to conceal the repulsion that so often is felt where the visit is most needed ; and there must be regularity. I do not mean routine, I do not mean that sort of house to house visitation in which every cottage knows when to expect the visit, and the inhabitant can either lock his door or tidy his floor to meet the case. The clergyman will not make it a point to visit every street on a particular day or every house in the street on the same day ; but he will give up a portion of every week, and certainly a portion of four days in every week, to visiting. In the smallest parish it is as well to have no day without a visit, and in the largest a certain number of hours should be devoted to the task, with complete regularity so far as concerns the habit of the minister, with the utmost elasticity as regards the routine of his work.

I shall not apologise for insisting very strongly on this, humble and secular and even trifling as it is sometimes thought! The first step may not be a long one, but unless the first step is taken the second can never be; and unless the individual be brought to touch, the flock can never be served, or won, or truly cared for. When that has been done, when the barrier has been broken down that your fastidiousness or their self-esteem or suspicion erects between you, confidence will be given, sympathy must follow; you will become a fresh link between them and the good that is in society, between them and the Church, between them and the Lord Himself, who needs no link of ours to bring Him near them, seeing that they are in His heart already, but who honours us with abundant honour, and blesses us with abundant blessing, letting us be, and be called His servants.

VI

THE sixth question put to the candidates for the diaconate and the sixth put to the candidates for the priesthood are the same, and concern the diligence that is due from every minister to frame his conduct and to guide his family according to the Gospel of Christ; the seventh question in the latter service engages the priest to labour for peace in

his parish and at large ; and the last, in either case, refers to the obligation of obedience to the bishop. Of these last I do not now care especially to speak further than to urge upon all of you the duty of considering that your first obligation lies to Christ and the flock, and that therefore, however strong your opinions may be about particular points of non-essential character, you must have patience with those who do not think with you, and you must yield, where real peace and the welfare of souls is concerned, to the judgment of those who are set over you, or who by experience are qualified to guide you.

I shall not put before you in this, any more than in the other cases of which I have spoken to you, any ideal which by its very nature is impracticable. I will not tell you not to be party men—in the present temper of the world any man who has any interest in his work must be a party man ; but I will warn you against party spirit, and would have you very careful about engaging in party organisations. There can scarcely be a greater offence against the spirit of Christ than the embittering and irritating practice of controversy. Let there be controversialists as there are advocates in the law courts ; it is not needful for every one to be a lawyer, certainly it is not necessary for every clergyman to be a controversialist. Learn

well the strength of your own cause, and do not be provoked into contests about things in which victory cannot strengthen you, but defeat will sorely humiliate you. That is bad enough, but the evil effect of the spirit of controversy on yourselves is far more dangerous, and to your ministerial usefulness it is absolutely fatal. On the other hand, complete or general co-operation with those who differ from you on essential points, in a false idea of charity, or in a vain hope of being able to win them over to your own side, is impossible. It is of no use for you to minimise your differences with those who will not minimise their differences with you ; it is absurd and wrong in you to act as if the difference between you and a dissenter was unimportant, when to his mind the difference is so important as to warrant him in rejecting that which is of the first moment and value to you, and which you cannot undervalue without doing dishonour to your own faith and to the Church and to the Head of the Church as He has given you grace to see Him. In social and secular matters you may co-operate fairly well with men of various views, but not in religious ones without a sacrifice far too great to be made with a good conscience or with hope of good effect. Take this advice as it is meant ; live peaceably with all men, but be not equally or unequally yoked together with

those who reject what to you is essential, and all in all.

Now, of the other point, the conforming your own practice and that of your families to the doctrine of Christ, that they and you may be examples to the flock, but far more important even than that, that they and you may keep a close hold on Him whose word you are to preach, and whose sacraments you are to minister, and whose work you are to help to complete by that mighty power and sympathy in which He condescends to associate you as fellow-workers with Him. The life of the faithful minister must be a consistent life, a regular, well-adjusted, consistent life: not priggish, not dictatorial, not puritanical, or unsociable, or censorious, but still careful to avoid offence, careful not to let the purity and simplicity which you practice as a duty of private obligation between yourself and your Lord be disparaged by outward carelessness of language, gesture, or pursuits, which, although quite innoxious to yourself, may cause the good itself that is in you to be evil spoken of. Here, again, I do not urge any unreal idea. I do not think that I need caution you against being hypocrites; I do not think that in these days hypocrisy is a very common temptation to the clergy; I do not say to you to be strait-laced or punctilious; do not pretend to think inno-

cent amusements wrong, because puritanical or sentimental opinion stigmatises them. Defend those who are attacked for doing things that you see to be innocent ; but do not give cause of offence to those whom it is of the utmost importance you should hold fast, by a mere wish to assert your own liberty. You may find that you must abstain from much that you deem lawful because a narrow-minded public opinion deems it unlawful ; well, do your best to improve that opinion, but do not reckon your own liberty above the welfare of the souls that you are in charge of ; offences must come, but do not let them, causeless as they may be—all the more fatal it may be because they are causeless—come through you. And as your personal behaviour should be such as to avoid even unreasonable offence, so let that of your family be guided. Do not let your children, if you have any, or your servants get into ways which, although innoxious to you or to them, may be examples to those to whom and in whom they will not be innoxious. In such simple matters as regular attendance at church and sacraments, there should be nothing in the conduct of the clergyman's household that can be alleged in excuse for their carelessness by the other households in the parish. Rightly or wrongly, your conduct will be regarded by those around you as on a higher level than

anything that is expected of them, and for every inch that you take in lowering the standard that you ought to maintain, they will take an ell ; they will in geometrical proportion make the very most of your shortcomings.

Do not think that in thus speaking of the duties of peaceableness and purity I am placing the obligation on worldly grounds, or on grounds of mere expediency. The obligation lies on a foundation immensely deeper, and that I most earnestly trust has not now in any of you to be begun to be laid. It lies in your own personal relation to your Lord ; it must be kept in strength and efficiency by constant prayer, careful self-discipline, examination of yourselves, and conscientious bringing into judgment of all the thoughts of your heart. I have spoken of it, however, chiefly in the aspect in which it has its bearing on the welfare of your flock, and as it is treated in the Ordination Service. If it be carefully observed as between you and Jesus, it must show itself in your relation to His people and yours. God help us all to live without offence.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CALL

I

THE address which in the Form for Ordering of Priests the bishop makes to those who are to be ordained contains four paragraphs which may, I think, furnish us with topics of consideration at the service by which we close our day's work during the examination. The first of these paragraphs states very strongly the high dignity and weighty office and charge to which they are called, who by the inner movement of God's Spirit on their will and by the outward commission of the Church are brought to take this honour unto themselves as called of God.

I will speak a word or two on this matter of dignity and weightiness, on the responsibility that you who are seeking to be ordained are seeking to take upon yourselves. In what we have to say about dignity, naturally we must think about humility, for the very high importance of the position which we accept as officers of the Church of Christ forcibly impresses upon us our own incapacity for filling it worthily; the

very excellency of our ministry forces on us the recognition of how unworthy we are, and how unfit by any gifts and powers of our own to execute the office as it should be exercised. If I say less on this point now, it is really because I do not believe that any young man in his senses and at all sincere could have gone so far as you have already gone in offering himself as a candidate for the office without having realised this. This is, I do not doubt, present to you now ; you know perfectly well, however conscious you may be of the gifts that God has given you, that you are aspiring to a dignity that is above you, and to a responsibility that you cannot maintain without special grace. I do not tell you to undervalue your gifts. If God has given to some of you an eloquent mouth, or a clear head, or a ready wit, or a great power of taking pains, or a pleasant manner, and habit, and experience of making yourselves all things to all men that by all means you may save some, I do not bid you by any false humility to undervalue these gifts ; only remember that they are gifts, and that He who has given them will take account of them. Do not overvalue them, and so be restless in the position to which He calls you because you do not think that you have scope enough for them, or because the possession of them suggests constantly that

you would be doing better elsewhere. It is quite right for you to wish for positions in which you can make the most of your special gifts, but you should wait until you have clear indication that God has need of you, and not spoil the work that He distinctly has set you, either by uneasy striving to do what is not demanded of you, or by attempting to force the work set you into grooves and channels that are more congenial to you, or by simply neglecting the real duty of your special position because it does not call forth the exercise of the ability on which you specially plume yourselves. In this respect we may, without presumption, I trust, appeal to the example of Him who, seeking the only new glory that could come to Him in the going Himself to minister, laid aside the exercise of all His divine dignity and humbled Himself, for thirty years of preparation, taking the form of a servant and found in the fashion of a man.

Well, I said, you all know that you must be humble, humble in your estimate of yourselves and humble in the exercise, in the devotion of those gifts which you do not undervalue but thank God that He has given you as some preparation for your warfare. But it is otherwise with the dignity of the office, and with the responsibility that that dignity involves and implies. There is

no room for personal conceit and personal assumption : the most dignified men that I have ever known have been also the most modest men ; never asserting themselves, never insisting on their own opinion, never offering gratuitous criticism ; never trying to put themselves in the right mainly that they may be able to put other people in the wrong, never provoking hostility or inviting opposition by a personal demeanour capable of being interpreted as arrogance or superciliousness. Such men never confound the humiliation of their office with their humble estimate of themselves ; they do not go about the world courting approval by saying that there is no difference between a clergyman and a layman, or between a clergyman of the Church and a dissenting minister ; they know that the clergyman is called to a dignity to which the layman is not called ; and whilst they will, if they are wise, avoid any invidious comparison with the ministers of communities which have not accepted the rule or inherited the commission that we believe ourselves to have inherited, they will not flinch for a moment from declaring that they have such a rule and commission, and that they will uphold its value and reality to the best of their power. Mind you, in relation to this, we do not assume to limit God's gifts, we do not claim to exclude those who have not the privilege that we

believe ourselves to have, but we do not, because they have it not, declare that we do not care about it, or do not believe in it. The clergyman of the Church of England has in his apostolic commission a record and character which, although it may be no sin in the outsider to deny, it is a sin in him to ignore.

How to reconcile the sense of personal unworthiness with the maintenance of the dignity of office and character of which I speak is a problem that will be worked out by the faithful clergyman by actual experience, and without much self-consciousness. The humility, if it be real, will not be of the sort that requires to be advertised by an outward demeanour that will call for notice. If it be real, those who have eyes to read character will see it, and it will be no matter of effort or even of consciousness in him who has realised it. The dignity, if the sense of it be real, will be as little self-asserting as the humility. The man who has it will, by the very force of his self-command, avoid doing anything that is unworthy, or seems unworthy, or is in danger of being interpreted as unworthy of the character that he has been called to work into his inward as well as his outward self. Depend upon it, in this most solemn relation, as in all the other relations of life, superficial or material, the real clergyman, like the real gentle-

man, never forgets himself and never has to re-collect himself, simply because his reality saves him from too great self-consciousness: he is not trying to appear what he is not; he is not trying to make other people think of him as he does not think of himself; he is not assuming or disguising, but doing his duty and trying to do it to Him who sees the heart; and what a duty it is, to be messengers, watchmen, and stewards of the Lord, to teach and to premonish, to feed and provide for the Lord's family, to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for His children who are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved through Christ for ever. Who is sufficient for this?

II

THE dignity of the office to which you are called is coupled, in the first clause of the bishop's address to the candidates for the priesthood, with the weightiness of the charge to be committed to them, and that weightiness and the sense of responsibility that realises it forms the chief topic of the second paragraph: the exceeding preciousness of the flock which He entrusts to you, who is the primary supreme and universal Shepherd, who laid down His life for the sheep, whose love is set on each member of the flock and on each section of the

flock as fully and intensely as if that one or that section were all that He died for ; who died for each and all because He loved each and all, and who now, admitting you to a share of His ministry for them, admits you not only to the glory of being his fellow-workers, but to the terrible responsibility of giving your lives for the brethren.

Observe the very significant words, "The Church and congregation that ye must serve is His spouse and His body," that is to say, the special portion of the people whom He puts you in charge of, is that portion of the flock which represents to you the tangible, visible presentment of the body of the Lord. Whatever your responsibility may be, or the nature of it, it is to your own special flock that you are the minister of Christ, and they are, so to speak, the Church of Christ to you ; not, of course, that you have not other duties or other relations to the Universal Church or the National Church, but they are they to whom your duty is due and for whom your responsibility is. No claim of any sort can be allowed to supersede this claim ; no call to perform other duty, no work on the platform or in the mission field, no work, however urgent, necessary, or likely to be useful, can supersede this ; no engagement, however strict, can dispense you from the exact keeping of the smallest engagement made with your own people. Nor

should you try to lessen the responsibility by letting any one come between you and them. There is work for missionaries and district visitors and other subordinate work and occasional work, but the minister in charge of a parish will be careful even to jealousy that his hold on his people be direct and immediate; he will know them and be known of them. I need not insist more on this, because for the man who recognises his real responsibility it will be no more possible to let a subordinate agency come between him and his people than it is for a husband to let a third person come between himself and his wife. There is nothing ideal, nothing unpractical in this in relation to most of the Cheshire parishes; in some few exceptional cases in which the population by its numbers and character seems out of the reach of a man's power to know it individually, we must look at the work according as the means of facing it lies within our compass. I do not think that in any case in which you are directly concerned that consideration comes before us now. What, then, is your responsibility? It is of great importance to you that you should see your way to some sort of ideal, I will not say definition of it, for either a morbid sentiment about it or a formal and business-like view of the way of discharging it will be alike fatal to

your usefulness. The morbid sentiment, however, is a very different thing from the callous *opus operatum* idea; and the two seem to lie at the opposite extremes of the practical line of duty.

Take the first first: the man who looks on his flock as the trust committed to him by the Lord who bought them, and who loves his Lord, enters into the Spirit of his Lord and loves his people. He loves them, not with a mere general good-will, but with an anxious care for each one of them in his individual trial and danger and special circumstances; he loves and tries to guard, and prays for, and warns and cares for, each one. If he or she sins, the sorrow of the faithful minister will often be much greater than the sorrow that the sinner feels for himself, and a very trying and sorrowful piece of self-examination it often is when the clergyman has to search and see whether he has indeed done everything that lay in his power to arrest the sinner in his evil course and bring him to repentance when he has done the sin. Here there is a realisation of responsibility enhanced by the special sympathy which, by his Master's grace, he is allowed to enter into with the suffering of Him who bore the sins of all.

But there is a limit to this identification with the flock, beyond which lies the morbid sentiment of which I spoke. You are responsible, but you

are not solely responsible, and you are not to think because your love and sympathy have been wasted and your good advice and guardianship have been unavailing to check or bring back the offender, that your work was rejected by your Lord, or that your ministry was useless or fruitless, or that you are, in the sense in which the word means idle and useless, an unprofitable servant. As in all the work of the world, so in the ministerial work the greatest results often come from apparent failures. You are not the judge who has to count the cost or to settle the amount of responsibility. Let God judge that when you have done your real best and nothing short of the best. All responsibility in human things is divided. Be sure your just judge sees that other causes besides your imperfect and ineffective work have a share in the fall of the member of your flock that falls; do your best, pray your utmost, spare nothing that your earnest love prompts, but never yield to the weak and somewhat selfish thought that because you fail God sees in your failure the whole cause of what has gone wrong.

The other extreme is, of course, the perfunctory idea of ministerial duty which, with many shades of difference, contents the mind of those who have not really tried to enter into the spirit of

the Saviour's work ; which says, I have done my duty to them, it is their lookout what happens. I have told them what is right, on their own heads be it if they have done wrong. I have done my day's work ; no one has a right to lay on me the blame of what is done contrary to my advice, contrary to my remonstrance, in defiance of my entreaties. Oh, that sad word, *Liberari animam meam*, when it is not so much your own soul as their souls that you have to be connecting with this thought of responsibility. If the one man exaggerates his burden, another treats it as if it were indeed no burden, as if he had no real realised share in the work and sorrows of the Man of Sorrows.

You will not expect that I should strike a mean between the two extremes. There is all the difference in the world between them : if the first needs strength he knows where to find it ; the second has to begin the first elements of the moral lesson and discipline of a servant of Jesus.

III

THE dignity and responsibility of the Christian ministry, which are the subjects of the first two paragraphs of the bishop's address, are the keynote of the other two, in both of which the duty and

benefit of the study of Scripture and of prayers are alike insisted on. I will say a word or two to-day on the first.

You are told, that as the Holy Scripture is the treasury of the arguments by which you are to maintain the doctrines of salvation, and contains also the model and rule of life to which you are to try to conform your own conversation and that of your people, it should therefore be the subject matter of your constant study, and as far as may be the exclusive subject matter. You are likewise told, that by daily reading and weighing of the Scriptures you may by the aid of the Holy Spirit wax riper and stronger in your ministry, and you are called on to promise that you will be diligent in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same, laying aside the study of the world and the flesh. It would be difficult to improve on the studied moderation and earnest impressiveness of this part of the exhortation; but I think that we may very well advance to the higher ground from which the authors of the exhortation must have viewed the points that they try here especially to emphasise. The Bible is the word of God. It is a collection of books written by inspiration of God; its books of history and prophecy are histories written by men to whom the Almighty revealed His way of looking at men's

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doings. The David of whom we read in Samuel and Kings is the David whose life God read and gives us to read, not as man reads it, but as it is in the eyes of the all-just and all-sympathising Witness.

The history of the preparation of the world for the Redeemer's mission is written, not as a distinct and paragraphed concordat of heavenly powers with one another, not as a constitutional manifesto, or charter, or report of a great transaction, but as God vouchsafed step by step to reveal it to those who waited for His salvation in Israel. The devotional parts of the Old Testament, the Psalms, and the hymns of the prophetic books are the revelation of the mind of God through the life and experience of those of His servants who came and desired to come nearest to Him. When David tells us that his heart showed him the wickedness of the ungodly, or that his heart exclaimed, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek," we know that for his admonition and for our instruction through his experience, God had revealed to him both the evil of the evil heart and the true way in which the aspirations of the penitent can make their way to His ears. The Psalms are in one respect the most remarkable book in the Bible, and therefore the strongest example of the truth that I want to set forcibly before you. For can anything be more strange than that the songs of the wild, wilful, wanton

outlaw, whom yet God, knowing how constantly and ever even in his sins he had set Him before his eyes, calls the man after His own heart,—the songs of the wild, wilful outlaw, written in circumstances and under conditions so various and so different from those possible in other ages and other lands, should yet become the songs of the Universal Church both in the house of her pilgrimage and in the bearing of her message to every sort and condition of men throughout the whole world that the Son of David died to ransom.

In the wonderful insight and variety of the Psalms, and even especially of those of which no criticism has availed to rob the son of Jesse, there is a key to all self-knowledge, and in that self-knowledge a guide to all experience touching the hearts of men. And I doubt not that it was by a divine instinct, as well as by blessed experience, that the ancient Church, and our own in conformity with the ancient usage, made the daily repetition of a large portion of the Psalter a part of the proper devotions of her ministers. No man who has not tried can at all realise how the practice gives a tone and colouring, a seasoning and flavour to the work of every day that has begun on such wholesome fare of spiritual nurture. You will see by what I have said of the Psalms what I mean. The Scriptures contain the mind of God

for man's reading ; history as read with His eyes, philosophy as read with His eyes, devotion as transfused by His Spirit : not, of course, as completely or as clearly as if it were written with His finger, but as, considering the circumstances and powers of those who wrote it, and the conditions under which the writing is possible, conveys to us the spirit, the sympathy, the wise judgment, the grounds of faith, in the holding of which faith differs from sight.

Of course, what I have said of the Old Testament is still more applicable to the New, the direct revelation of which, in the mouth of Him who worked the salvation of mankind, and of the apostles and evangelists who had received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit Himself, seems to come more immediately, as well as more clearly, to us than do the lessons of even one whose heart we know as well as we know David's. The recommendation or exhortation of the paragraph before us seems to me to contain advice both for the devotional and for the exegetical study of the Scriptures ; the devotional to be especially pursued in conformity with the direction that every clergyman shall read the daily office every day in his church : an obligation which, I need hardly say, no disuse of the practice can really be interpreted to dispense. Those who have tried it know, as I

said, what a strength and stay, what a suggestive fountain of holy thoughts, and what a supply of good influences a daily service is to those who are so happy as to enjoy it: a daily revelation to the open mind of something more of the mind of Christ. The elaborate and persistent study of the same word, with lexicon and grammar and commentary, as well as with prayer for enlightenment, is likewise an obligation that no young clergyman can do without, and from which the oldest and most experienced will be constantly gaining broader and fuller light; and I trust that all of you will, from the beginning, make a point of securing some regular section of every day for leisure to do this. What the bishop says about the exclusive study of the Scriptures must, I think, in these days be interpreted with some liberal construction. The clergyman of these days is expected, and rightly expected, to be abreast of the society in which he lives in other subjects besides the study of Scripture; but for all that, the study of the Scripture stands first, and a long way the first, of all in his list; and every other subject must be pursued with the same desire to justify the wisdom of the highest, that prompts the study of the word of God. Take the word of one who has spent, it may well be, too much time on other reading: all reading that is worth the name of study can be,

and should be, made to subserve the great object of your lives henceforth ; for all knowledge comes from and converges to the same great purpose, the proof and publishing of the truth that is of the glory of Him who can in all these things make His will clear to us.

IV

THE fourth point urged in the bishop's address to the candidates for the priesthood is the privilege and duty of the minister to pray for himself and his people ; and this is a duty and privilege so clear and so plainly consequent on the realisation of the dignity and responsibility of the office that it hardly seems needful to attempt any justification or exposition respecting it. And yet like most obvious things there is an amount of difficulty and even of mystery about it, and there are many lessons touching it which, however often they may be inculcated, will never be learned without long and sometimes bitter experience. For the assistance of the Holy Ghost to be given to help you to discharge your office faithfully and effectively, it is quite a matter of course that you should pray, and if your heart is in your work, or even desirous to be in your work, you will pray regularly and earnestly, pray for strength

and courage and discretion ; pray for boldness to warn the sinner, for the power of sympathy to comfort the penitent, for tact and caution to deal with those who are in suspense or in conflict, for patience to deal with those in whom after many disappointments there is still a hope that He who has sent you to them will secure them in the end, for growth in spiritual wisdom, for growth in hopefulness, and for the maintenance of such faithfulness and zeal as will prevent you from ever losing heart and complaining that your work is useless and yourself incapable and unworthy of trying to serve God or teach souls the way to life. According to your sense of your needs must your prayers be, and the more heartily you work, the more clearly you will see your deficiencies, and the more certainly and precisely you will be able to tell your heavenly Father what you have need of, knowing that He knows it better than you already, and does not wait even until you begin to realise it before He gives the gifts which are to arm and strengthen the willing heart. Your prayers for yourself will be a sort of gauge of the heartiness and sincerity of your work in one way, yes, in every way.

But I will speak more directly now of your prayers for your people. Here you will find one of the greatest and most crucial trials of your minis-

terial life. You are sent by God to a particular cluster of people ; you are not to look upon them as a cluster or a class ; you are not to speak of them to God or to your own self as a mass ; you cannot take them in the lump ; as God sees every individual soul of them singly and severally, so you must look on them. Of course I am speaking of what is possible ; some of you in large parishes cannot get at a considerable portion of your people who are dissenters or otherwise fenced against you, for them you can only pray as a class ; but for your own people, for your congregation, for all that can be brought within the lines of the congregation, you have an individual charge. You must know them, you must tolerate them, uninteresting and commonplace as they may be ; you must sympathise with them, unsympathetic as they may be. You must habituate yourselves to them, repulsive as they may be ; in point of fact you must learn to love them, to care for them one by one, as your Lord cares for them and cares for you. And I do not think that you will find this very difficult, your heart being in the right place ; for you will find that the very work among them is endearing work, and that He will make it comparatively easy and pleasant when He sees you determined to do it. But it is very full of disappointment, and the disap-

pointment will often come most distinctly, and will always come most bitterly, where the hope has been the highest. The dearest children in the school, the most earnest of the Bible-class, the most sympathetic helper against the tide of sin, may be amongst those in whom the heart of the clergyman will be most severely wrung—their very susceptibility of character laying them open to the greatest fall. And then there is the mischief arising from the working of competing religious organisations: it is a truly bitter thing to see your best Sunday scholars won away from Church to dissent, and made to turn against you, it may be against you personally, or against the Church, the very weapons that you have put into their hands; but bitterest of all it is to lose them, to lose the hearts that you had thought loved you and your Master.

It is a mystery, and I spoke of this on Wednesday in speaking about responsibility. It is a mystery, but not an insoluble one, that here are people, individual men and women, boys and girls, whose souls Jesus died for and whom He is longing to save, and to whom He sends you, and you are earnestly striving to secure them by teaching, training, and advising them, yes, and by showing them that you do indeed care for them, entering into their lot,

sorrowing for their sins, labouring for their restoration; you know that your Lord wants them to be saved, you know that He hears and will grant the prayers that are offered to the Father in His name, and you know that, however imperfect your prayers are, they are hearty and sincere; you pray, and God would grant your prayer, if it were not that another law of His divine justice crosses the line of prayer and the answer. Even the mighty strength of prayer cannot break down the law that makes a man responsible for himself. There is nothing for it but to continue constant in prayer and to trust Almighty God to bring to bear on the heart and mind of the penitent forces and influences over which you have no power. It will be no consolation to you merely to think that you have done your duty, but it will be a great consolation to think that you have cast your care on Him who cares for both alike, and taken Him into a full partnership of your love and sorrow who is in you really the fountain Himself of all such love and sorrow. The freedom and readiness of recourse to the Lord Jesus in prayer for your people is so great a relief and comfort and privilege, such an immense source of strength and courage and hopefulness, that I cannot exaggerate the need of making an early beginning of the habit. I am well aware that all minds do not

work alike in this respect, that there are some to whom articulate prayer is a very much harder thing than it is to others; but if any of you are so constituted, let me say this much in encouragement: all prayer is not offered on the knees or in private; there may be, there is, prayer in every lifting up of the heart to Him who is watching, and in every sincere and earnest desire in which we feel our want of the help of the Son and of the Spirit. And it may be with most of us that the life of prayer is more continuous in the regular living with an uplifted heart, with definite longings, but almost unconscious effort of intercession, than in long and circumstantial devotions. Anyhow, the one you ought to do, and you cannot leave the other undone. The minister who can pray so for his people will not need to be taught how to pray for himself.

OUR MISSION

I

OF all the recorded scenes of our Lord's life on earth, I do not think that there is one that seems to set us closer to Him than that described by St. John as taking place on the evening of the day of the Resurrection ; and to-night, if your thoughts are with mine, it is very close indeed. I am speaking to you, of course, as clergymen or as persons intending to be clergymen, sent or asking to be sent, under the commission which the Saviour characterises, "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." I do not confine the idea of the sending to this commission exclusively, so as not to recognise in their due force and dignity that inward moving of the Holy Ghost on one side, or the due order of this realm on the other, which are the subject of the first two questions of the Ordination Service, and which are or should be, in all loyalty, inseparable, so far as we are concerned, from the "sending." But I think that there is a more distinct sort of realised personal relation involved in

the mission than can be regarded as involved in the inward moving. Believing in the words of the apostle and supplementing them by the history of the Church, we may be said to know that He sent those who send us, and that He sent them with a promise capable of tangible, visible, and audible proof. "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." "He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth Me, and whoso receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me."

Whomsoever He sends in other ways, and what ever may be the ways of sending, hereby we hold the belief that He sends us. He breathed on them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." As at His own baptism, so here the action of the Father and the Holy Ghost are set forward to us; warranted here by the words of the Son, as in the baptism Father and Holy Ghost co-operate to the identification of the Son. Those whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, He sent, have, in the process of ages and generations, conveyed on that portion of the divine commission to us, even ourselves unworthy, with the force, and the errand, and the example, and the promise. The inward moving of the Spirit urges you to say, "Here am I, send me." The external and historic transmission of the message to you denotes the acceptance of the offer which He

has inspired, authorising none to take this honour unto himself except as he is called, as was Aaron. Well, I say, this does seem to put us, in a sort of way, into a realised personal relation with Jesus, even according to the flesh ; if duly realised, it almost implies the hearing of the word "*so send I you*" in our own ears, and the feeling of the breath upon us when He breathed on those who sent us.

Of course to certain minds this sort of realisation is liable to take an exaggerated form, but it is not with exaggerated forms, either dogmatic, ideal, or historic, that I have to do now. I would take the thought in the simplest form in which it is susceptible of being realised and ask you to look on your ordination as the representment, the continuation, the contact, the actual impact of the threefold inauguration of the apostles by Father, Son, and Spirit on that great evening ; and then, seeing the Saviour in the midst, sending you and breathing upon you ; to think first what is the idea of the mission, and second what is the translation of that idea under the modes, conditions, and circumstances of the life that lies around you and before you, from this day onward until you die. And think also, whilst we are asking about this, that, in these circumstances, there can be no shadow of self-deception ; granted that it is possible for you to have misgivings about the inward movement, you

can have no doubt as to the intention of the word of mission. "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." Your mission is the similitude, the continuance, the application of the Saviour's mission. A long way off, and with infinitely great and numerous drawbacks, the work that you are sent to do is of the same character as the work that the Father sent Him to do; and the Spirit whom you are to receive is the same Spirit of whom He spake, who should lead us into all truth, who should bring to the conviction of the world sin, righteousness, and judgment, and seal in the heart and life of the faithful the promise of eternal life.

Take the three most distinct characters of our Lord's own mission: He was sent as a teacher, He was sent as a minister, He was sent to save the world—the Good Shepherd giving His life for the sheep. You are to be sent to be messengers, watchmen, and stewards; and the sheep of Christ which He bought with His death, and for whom He shed His blood, are the great treasure committed to your charge—a definite portion of that flock to be to you the spouse and the body of Christ. *Teachers*, you have to begin to teach yourselves; *teachers*, you have to realise to your own souls and consciences the grounds on which you believe that which you undertake to teach: study of the

Word, discipline of the thoughts, concentration of the powers of your mind, devotion of all the diversified gifts which you may thank God for giving you to qualify you to be acceptable and effective in the bringing in and building up of disciples. *Teachers*, training yourselves to give an answer to every one that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you; *teachers*, skilled in the lessons profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness; *teachers*, able to guide to whatever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise; *teachers*, losing all thought, in their teaching, of their own powers or of their own success in the absorption of all ends and aims in the winning of the people for the Lord; *teachers*, all stedfast, all loyal, seeking their joy and crown in the saving of those to whom the Master of all sends them, to bring home and finish His work. Who is sufficient for this? Yet most certainly you are to be sent to try.

Next, *ministers*, stewards of the mysteries, and of the manifold grace of God: sent as He was sent, not to be ministered unto, but to minister. *Ministers* to speak for God to the people, and to the people for God; not only as teachers with authority, but as stewards with authority; not as coming between the people and God, but as bring-

ing the people to God, and in his stead to them declaring the application of His forgiveness, the appropriation of His gifts, the immediate and individual contact of His grace. *Ministers*, acting, as we say, ministerially, so far as that means the effacing of our personal action in the realisation of the fact that it is His work that we are doing, but following Him also in the reality of the service done; in the sacramental words, knowing that it is His word we are speaking, but likewise directing our message to the heart to which we speak it with a direct and conscious sympathy. *Ministers* to a definite charge of souls; not discharging yourselves of a sense of responsibility by perfunctory work, not even wrapping up your ministerial consciousness in the exercise of absorbed devotion; but coming before God for your people with the individual needs of your people in your hearts, and speaking His words of healing with a consciousness of the soreness of the hearts that He, through you, is trying to heal. *Ministers*, not to masses, not to classes, not to clusters of men and women, or even to cliques of disciples, but to the individual minds, souls, consciences to which He would speak through you, and minister His grace through your dispensing hands. Who is sufficient here? yet, beloved, you will try.

Once more. "As Thou hast sent Me into the

world, even so have I also sent them into the world," witnesses of the truth, ministers of grace, but also into a fellowship of suffering. A fellowship of suffering with a share of victory, essentially realised in the identification of the priest with his people. Bearing their griefs, carrying their sorrows, earnestly desiring the gifts that they want but know not that they want them; earnestly praying for their repentance from the sins of which they are scarcely conscious; earnestly working to keep out of their way the temptations which, if they saw them, they would run after; earnestly working and praying for light for them whilst they are content to sit in darkness; loving with a love of the same sort, because of the same kindling, from the same heart, from the same altar, loving with the Saviour's love those whom He has sent them to save. Those whom He sends so, enter into that fellowship of His sufferings; grieve over the sins of the people, grieve over the disappointment of faithful hope, for prayers that in so many cases have seemed to fail of answer, work that for so many years seems to fail of all result; grieve far deeper, far deeper, than any grief into which the thought of self enters, for the perishing of those loved, for the sins of the sinner, for the relapse of the penitent, for the failure of their promise, for the unfruitfulness of their attempts to

work. The good parish priest cares for his people far more than they care for themselves, bears heavily the burdens that they bear lightly, prays earnestly the prayers that they pray formally, is miserable in the sins which they persuade themselves are no sins; in his identification of himself with them, suffers for them and in them, entering, as He is sent, into the fellowship of the sufferings of the Lord. Again we say, Who is sufficient? Where is the force of such self-effacement? Who is to teach us the discipline of such endurance? Yet, you will try to fulfil the task, and to fulfil it so that it shall be no task at all, simply the outcome of the love that He has shed abroad in your hearts—His own love. "Even so send I you." There is much more, much that even the few thoughts which I suggest now force on in the way of corollary; but we will stay here. Here is an ideal, very high exalted.

How and when and where does the minister of Christ bring this ideal out in his life? Is it a dream of an enthusiast, or is it a summary of principles capable of being translated into the language, the ways and manners of our daily life? Surely it is no dream; surely it is no vision that reveals itself to the minister in his hour of seclusion, or when he is on his knees before the altar, a revelation of high calling, duty, privilege,

and dignity, which fades away when he opens his eyes on the streets and lanes of his parish, or opens his mouth to speak to those the language of whose life he has scarcely tried to learn. The ways and manners of men change; and the outer garb and address of George Herbert's country parson comes scarcely nearer to the life of to-day than it comes to the life of the first missionaries of the Gospel, or theirs to the garb and address of St. Peter and St. Paul. Yet the sending is for the same errand, and on the same principle; yet the world hates the servant of Jesus as it hated the Master, turns from his light, undervalues his gifts, doubts his sincerity. Yet the sinner is as hard to bring to repentance, spite of all our high morality; still the light that is in the blinded hearts of them that believe not, is darkness in spite of all our education, all our illumination of the minds of young and old.

And it ought not to be difficult for us to discover, under all the confusing varieties of modern life, the unity of purpose, and the concentration of heart that marks the consciousness that we are sent of God. Under the weariness of intensely prosaic routine, under the repulsiveness of unvaried common-place, quite as much as in the stirring, stimulating, struggling energy of open combat, the servant of the Lord

finds his errand and his reward. The daily visit to the village school, the ever-recurring need of trying to make the things that are to be made clearer to the children clearer to yourself; the daily visiting of the people, trying to get them to see that their cares, their burdens, their sorrows, their sins, are cares, burdens, sorrows, sins on your heart and conscience, but ending in nine cases out of ten, nine days out of ten, in the simplest exchange of civil words and the maintenance of familiar acquaintanceship; the daily looking over the pages of the Bible, which are as familiar to you as your own thoughts, and in danger of becoming quite as immaterial; the daily performance, if you do perform them, of the prescribed offices of devotion; the hammering out of sermons which, whilst you write them, seem to lose all chance of touching the hearts of those for whom you mean them, and to become cold and humdrum as the ink dries, which yet He may direct to the heart of the hearer; is it not one test of your mission, your fitness, and your earnestness, how far you can put into these simple expressions of outside work the principles, the desire to realise them, which I have spoken of, as principles in which your Lord's mission is continued to and in you? "If He had asked of me some great thing, would I not have done

it?" If I fail in these small things, what could I do in the great ones? Yet, in truth, these are great things, done in the Spirit of Him who tells us, "He that would be greatest among you let him be your minister; even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

And these are the things for which you offer yourselves and are to be sent. May He who gives the errand proportion your strength to your day, and help you to know, and to work, and to suffer, so that, when His great reward comes, He may show you your share, and give you of His glory. But now what are we that we should think or speak of such things? Well, you are going into very varied scenes; your trials and opportunities both lie in a great diversity of doing and suffering, of resistance to varied temptations, of vistas of varied needs and occasions. May He, whose manifold wisdom is a match for all the varied difficulties and hindrances, minister abundantly the spirit of *wisdom*, and teach you how to refer each case of trial and question to the true criterion of decision, ministering abundantly the spirit of *understanding*; and guide you to take the right means to the right end, ministering abundantly the spirit of *counsel*; and teaching your hands to war and your fingers to fight, with watchfulness,

courage, and true-heartedness, minister abundantly the spirit of *ghostly strength*; and helping you to fit yourselves and your actions to your surroundings, growing in grace as you grow in experience, minister abundantly the spirit of *knowledge*; and, drawing you into the sympathies of His own loving affection for His people and yours, minister abundantly the spirit of *true godliness*; and may He so fill you with the spirit of His *Holy Fear* that there may be no room in your heart or contemplation for any motives that will not meet His eye; but you shall have the full sense of the gift that shall be in you of power and love and the self-discipline of a sound mind. What is to be sought for more, what can be sought for or asked for more than the fulfilment of such a promise? Yet to him that hath shall more be given.

II

TO-DAY I will speak of authority, of the responsibility of authority and of the snare of it, and take for the motive word that verse of the 13th Ezekiel, describing the false prophets of Israel: "Have ye not seen a vain vision, and have ye not spoken a lying divination, whereas ye say, The Lord saith it, albeit I have not spoken?" or "The Lord saith, and the Lord hath not sent them." Realise

first : that you are going to be put into the position to say, The Lord hath spoken, the Lord hath sent us. How will you justify the assertion when you make it ; how will you verify it to yourself so that you can feel that you are limiting it to what you have really authority to say, and at the same time fully declaring all that you have authority to say ? Now, there should be no doubt as to the reality of your mission ; there is no doubt. God wants labourers ; He has sent me to do my best to send such labourers into His vineyard. He wants workers ; I ask whom shall I send. You offer yourselves, you say " send us." Very well, if you answer to such conditions as are becoming for workers for Him, you shall be sent. I can test a part of your fitness, but it is to Him direct that you have to give account for your assertion that you have such a call to go, as you will be asked to profess on the ordination day. That is a matter which you must settle with God ; if you say that you believe you have a call, and do not believe it, you have spoken a falsehood. But whether it be true or not, the mission, the sending, which you will have through your ordination, will be a true and real mission : the Lord will have sent you, whether or no your heart has deceived you as to your fitness to go. Set that well to heart and pray to Him to give you that fitness which, whether you have or have

not deceived yourselves, is impossible and insufficient without His continual help. You will be sent on Trinity Sunday, if you carry on to execution you will so to devote and dedicate yourselves, and that being done, you will have authority. The historic and apostolic mission will be added upon your vow, and the Holy Ghost will bestow the authority.

But authority for what? Simply to do His work and to say His words. When you are doing His work and saying His words, you will have the reality of the authority, the reality of the mission, not else. As He sends you, your first duty is to do what He sends you for, all that He sends you for, and not beyond it either way, and the object of your first inquiry is to realise that very extensive, and deep, and high it is, but not without its well-defined character and essential limits. Do you feel sure that He has sent you to do what you say that He has sent you for? Realise the purpose of your mission; find out what you have to do, and do it.

But next, do not assert that you have His authority to do or to say that for which you have not His authority. Your position will give you some authority: the right use of that authority will win for you the respect and confidence of your people. The very fact that you have their respect and con-

fidence may become a temptation to you to use the authority for purposes for which it was not given; to utter false divinations and to push matters of your own self-wilfulness, not saying perhaps in words, "The Lord saith," when He has not spoken, but using the authority of your mission for things which are not within your commission. That is the snare that is inherent in the whole working of the ministerial commission; and it needs continual watchfulness over yourself, and as continual watchfulness over the flock. It needs the most careful study of your actual commission, a wide and spiritual commission, susceptible of a wide spiritual interpretation—an interpretation that reveals itself in prayer and constant meditation on the words of the Master. It needs the most careful examination of your own motives, lest you come to believe not what He has spoken, but what you wish that He had spoken, and so come to say, as if they were His words, not what He but what you yourself have thought. It needs constant discipline of word and thought and look and tone and gesture. To say the Lord hath spoken, when He has not sent you to say that which you say He has sent you for; that is, and always has been, and always will be, the inherent temptation. It is peculiar to no Church or communion or sect; it comes most as a temptation,

perhaps, to those who are most sincere and who have tried most honestly to realise the authority with which God invests them. It is the real priestcraft against which all ages of the Church have struggled, and which has brought discredit and shame on the very office which our Lord has committed to us.

Think over this matter. You say God has called you ; I say God will send you. Find out whether that to which He has called you is that to which I, under His authority, am to send you ; then realise what the work is, and what it will be made if you let party spirit or worldliness, or self-will, take the place which can only be taken by the commission of the Holiest, "The Lord hath spoken."

THE CHURCH

I

Lord, what love have I unto Thy law.—Ps. cxix. 97.

THERE is surely a feeling, a sentiment, more than that, a very habit of the soul, in regard to divine things, which is analogous to what, in regard to the temporal things of life and home, we call patriotism and loyalty. We can love our Church as we love our country, with the mixed feeling that we are loving something that is our own, and something at the same time that has a sovereign and indisputable claim to our love. And the more we realise what the meaning of the Church is, and what are the sanctions on which it claims our affection, the more exalted, and also the more intimate, become the terms in which we would define our loyalty. We believe in and love the law of God as so manifested to us, with a sentiment, a habit, a living faith, which, both with regard to the idea and with regard to the fact of the Church, realises that article of the Creed in no shadowy or unsubstantial way: the Church of Christ is the Body

of Christ, our own Church is that organisation by which we realise our membership of the body of Christ, with all its blessings, privileges, and responsibilities. We *can* say with meaning, "Lord, what love have I unto Thy law."

And to those who, even in a superficial way, can realise this, anything like formal disloyalty is intensely repulsive. We cannot bear to hear men criticising, finding fault, proposing reconstructions and constitutional changes, in propositions and speculations which disparage and even seem to throw shame on what is a part of our life, and of all that makes it worth living. We regard, as a matter of personal grievance, the misrepresentation of her history, the caricatures of her heroes, saints, and martyrs, the scoffs at her shortcomings. We acknowledge, indeed, that the Bride of the Lord is still, in one sense, in the wilderness, and that we, her members, are erring and straying individually and collectively, in spite of the guidance of the arm of the Beloved; we long and pray for help to amend all that is to be amended, to build up what is broken down, to gather in all that have strayed, but we cannot tolerate the idea that because that which is perfect is not yet come, we should be unfaithful; nay, loyalty to the idea implies loyalty to the fact by and in which we realise the idea, and indeed

the Church of Christ is not an idea but a fact, and the realising of it, and our relation to it, not a pious, or a philosophic speculation, but the law of a life full of flesh and blood, full of personal and real right and duties, a substantial history and substantial appliances. But although, as I say, formal disloyalty is a thing intolerably repulsive, as much so, indeed, as the treason of the man who betrays his queen and country, there are ways of looking at the matter, there are utterances of even pious liberality, and there are schools of popular religion, even amongst those who would think it a shame to desert the cause of the Church, which are very puzzling to men who are accustomed to deal straightforwardly with their own difficulties; and, besides, there is a large mass of religious opinion, which not only does not claim to realise the Church as we do, but protests against the truth or possibility of the realisation on our part. There are men to whom the idea of the Church, if they are willing to acknowledge the cogency of the article in its place in the Creed, is so different from ours, that our very assertion of our position and belief strikes them as an unwarranted assumption or an actual dogmatic imposture.

I do not propose now — indeed, in a short ordination address it would be impossible—to

attempt to argue with those who deny the possibility of our realising the position we hold to, or to criticise the conduct of those whose utterances seem to sound somewhat discordantly with their expressed convictions on this matter. But I think that it is not an inappropriate time for me to put before you, who are going to make an offering of your lives to the cause of Christ as ministers of the Church of England, some considerations that will help, by restraint or encouragement, those of you who love the law, as something of their own and of their Lord's, to the exercise of the loyal faithfulness, the true-heartedness by which, so far as we can see, and by which alone, the service that they are undertaking can be made a perfect freedom.

Begin, then, with this thought : Our blessed Lord founded a church, a body of members, an organisation with rules of initiation, confirmation, consummation ; a law of life, an order of government, a system of devotion ; a body of members which by those ways, that is, by the Holy Spirit guiding them in the following of those ways, realise their life as a part of the life of the Lord Incarnate. It is nothing less ; it is not an idea or a syllabus of notions, it is not a school of thinkers, it is not a society of volunteers ; it is a body with a life in Him. Our Lord's work and teaching did, no

doubt, much besides the foundation of this body ; it set before the world a code of morals and a system of belief which has from the beginning produced ideas and schools of thought and epochs of moral history, changes, developments, and reactions, which are not of themselves, however importantly they may have affected the body of the Church, an integral part or essential accompaniment of the membership of it. From the beginning there were divergences of thought ; before the conversion of the Roman empire there were heresies and schisms ; since that time there have been many divisions and schools, within and without the body, and men have declared, as in the apostolic days, that, because their opponents were not the foot or the hand, they were not of the body. And, doubtless, those who repudiate apostolic rule, faith, order, and devotion, separating themselves and choosing out of the scholastic teaching of the Church only what approves itself to their own wilful beliefs, can only, in strict logic, if they are called Christians at all, call themselves listeners of the school of Christ. It is not for us to say in what relation He, the head of the body, may regard them as, in some transcendental sense, members of it ; they can scarcely claim a membership of a body the reality of which they deny. It is not for us, I say, to judge.

Of this body of the Saviour I must assume that you believe your own Church to be to you the presentment ; at all events, it is by her work that you have been made members of this body. It is through her orders, sacraments, teaching, and discipline, that you have been guided hitherto in the development of your religious life. It is under her due order that you are to-day undertaking the solemn obligations under which, indelibly in heart and conscience, morally and spiritually, as well as legally, you are to place yourselves to live and work. Can you, will you, do you intend, how can you be helped to, maintain your present resolution to be loyal ? Now, far be it from me to pretend that there are no difficulties, or even to assume that I know them all, as they may occur, or as indeed it may be they have occurred to you already, according to your circumstances. There is to begin with : if the Church is the living body of the Lord, and our Church our portion in the living body, must it not work all the functions of life, and if it must live must it not be subject to the influences to which all living bodies are amenable—consciousness of change and variation, change within and without, developments of idea and practice, fortunes and destinies, ebbs and flows of adventure, liberty of individual effort ? Can the iron hand of an early past be suffered to

hold in subjection the growth of thought and opinion? and is every breaking away from a standard, which may, so far as external evidence goes, seem to have been fixed almost by an accident, to be regarded as heresy, or schism, or even as disloyalty to a system which, if it is to be so used, must perish in the using? If this is not to be so, how is the loyalty to the law we love to be reconciled with that freedom without which true love is inconceivable? Are we to rest content with a dead, leaden level? and, indeed, can a law which is accepted simply because it is imposed, and men care not enough about it to rebel or question it, can such a law be said to be really accepted at all? Surely we are bound to prove all things.

Even so, prove them, but do not reject them because they are not proved, when you might have proved them and have not. This form of difficulty, which in the phase that comes most frequently before us is much the same as the question of the balance between authority and free will, can, as an abstract question, be treated only by the testing of the authority and of the free will. It is not a matter for every man's treatment, for it is not in every man's power to analyse the proofs on which authority rests, or the assumption of a freedom of will which is subject

to the action of such a multitude of forces as our wills, prejudices, aspirations, misgivings involve. We pray over as well as study the arguments on which our dogmatic faith rests, the evidences of history and experiences, knowing that the basis of it is not so much in philosophic axioms as in historic fact. We pray God to help us to a right issue, and *that*, in all regions in which the balance has to be struck, not only in doctrine, but in history and policy, and the moral law that runs through spiritual reading. We pray for guidance, desiring to believe, not setting up standards of what God's government of His Church ought to be, any more than of what His dispensation of atonement must have been to approve itself to our reason. We pray that, accepting the law as it comes to us, we shall have, by-and-by, more clear revelation: we shall see the unity, holiness, and catholicity that our Lord prayed for for His Church vindicated in its due time and by His working. Meanwhile, what love have we unto His law; all the day long be our study in it.

But the abstract difficulty may be a difficulty to few; it is when the immediate temptation, the immediate call for action, the immediate determination between opposing courses and influences come before us, that the danger to loyalty

becomes imminent. We can imagine a politician a statesman even, who may have a very distinct view as to the inferiority of monarchy to democracy, and yet be thoroughly loyal; he will not pervert or misinterpret the law as it is, by the idea of what he might wish it to be; when he is tempted to substitute the one for the other by whatever means, then comes his trial. We can imagine also a churchman who may have a very strong impression that the rites and practices of Rome or of Geneva may come nearer to apostolic ideal than those of England, and yet be truly loyal to the Church which is his mother, and to the fact and idea that she impersonates to him; but when, continuing nominally in her obedience, he is tempted to substitute the one set of practices, or the one set of principles for the other, to disparage those of his own Church in contrast with those of the other, or to justify his departure from the rules of his own by his belief in the superiority of the other, then comes the trial to him; and he may not justify disloyalty by any claim of abstract freedom or any plea of superior obligation. So, within the lines of the question that we are now debating, we may fairly say that the right of appeal to the sovereign tribunal of truth must be sought for only through the process of the courts of God's law which He

has set up for the solution of the questions of His people. That tribunal cannot be at the same time invoked and defied. We may not go to the Urim and Thummim save through the action of the High Priest, or use the Bible as a book of scribes, like Balaam seeking enchantments before he set his face towards the wilderness. Nay, He who would guide us into all truth will not answer questions that of themselves imply unfaithfulness.

But I pass on. The faith of the most loyal man must not shrink from great and seemingly crucial trial. Loyalty to the idea of the Church may itself sometimes make it difficult to be loyal to the fact. There have been, no doubt, days when the misgovernment of rulers, the abuse of secular influence, the strain of political partisanship, have tempted holy men to cry, This is not the ideal we have beheld, and, much as we have been blessed in this communion, these things justify us in looking for the ideal elsewhere. And they have forgotten the word of the Son of Man, that in the days to come we should desire to see one of His days and should not see it, long for the day of absolute unity and vindicated truth and inexpugnable safety—unity, truth, and safety, which His own presence did not secure to His chosen whilst He was with them. They have sought it

elsewhere, and acted on the disloyal self-will which has mastered their convictions; but whatever else they may have found, this which the Saviour has warned them that they should not find, they have not found. Again, we judge them not, but pray God to keep us from the self-will worship that misleads them, and seek the way of true progress by carefully doing the duty that lies before our feet. We will not ask to be delivered without the trials of a faith, that is the law of the way by which we are seeking a better country; we will ask to be helped to conquer, and to hold fast. We will pray to be kept loyal to the ideal and to the facts of our calling, and so to live worthy. Do we ask how should this loyalty affect our conduct in relation to the outer world; are we to hold as enemies those who deny, those who attack, those who misrepresent and scorn the law that we train ourselves studiously to love? I think that very true loyalty is so sure that it can well afford to dispense with hard words, and that it must by now have learned the wisdom and policy of abstaining from them. The loyal churchman does not brand as sinful schism the sects or the members of the sects that, following the authorities by which they have been led into the religion they love, are really showing a loyalty that is like his own, a loyalty that may deserve to be led right. He will

not multiply or retaliate charges of heterodoxy or heresy. But neither will he derogate from the honour of the ideal and fact of his love by pretending to regard such differences as have caused discussion, as being unimportant in themselves and in their bearings. The sovereignty of truth may tolerate, but will not condone error; the loyalty of the man of faith may endure, but will not acquiesce in contradictions. And he who loves his Church will not cast in his lot with those who hate, or at all events say that they hate her. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Well, the loyalty of the churchman is well accustomed to be called bigotry, because he will not condescend to treat the things that are inseparably bound up with his spiritual life, as matters to be lightly accounted of, in comparison with the professions of religious liberality, or quasi-religious co-operation and unity. But he knows that the securing and defining of unity is a part of the work and purpose of God, that his own work is to hold fast the truth that God has granted him to see, and to do the duty that God has honoured him by allotting him. He knows that the Master has assigned him a work, and that to his children, nay, to himself, in God's good time, will be shown the glory and the unity, the truth, oneness, holiness,

and catholicity of the cause he loves. What more? God is patient and strong—whose patience, as whose faithfulness, can be like His?—a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He, and all His ways are judgment. If He tarry we can wait for Him.

Beloved, I have said a good deal in this address, short as it is—more perhaps than it was wise to say; but you will not forget it. At this juncture, the most critical in your lives, words spoken from my heart to your heart will surely not be without their errand. Let me leave off with two cautions, which, if you remember them, will help to keep you, at all events, not ashamed of your loyalty. First, be very careful never to think of your Church as of something outside of yourself, or of yourself as outside of your Church; if you realise your relation to your Lord in it you must know that it is of the innermost life of your life—not a shrine or a sanctuary, but of the life of your life. Never look on it as from the outside, as a thing to be criticised, praised, or blamed, set up for reform or reconstruction, for you to traffic with, or hold committees on, or report on, in any but the ways in which its administrative work is amenable to such treatment. Do not compare it with other Churches, as if it were with you a mere matter of opinion; do not cry shame because you

fail to realise the manifestation of the perfect purpose of the Saviour, for which you should work and pray, but which you cannot forestall, in unity, holiness, and victory. The loving son does not question his father's fatherhood or his mother's motherhood. Then, secondly, remember that of this army of the living God you are a soldier with work set you that must be done: work that, if you do it, is itself the blessing and recognition of your acceptance, but, if it be not done by you, God will indeed provide for, whilst it is only as by fire that you can escape the penalty of your neglect or unfaithfulness, not at all justified by your speculation of how the battle, in which you have played the part of a traitor, ought to have been set in array. The law to which you are to be loyal is a law which you feel to be something of your own, and yet to have the sovereign claim upon you which can only be met and made real by unflinching, determined love, patience, courage, out of a true heart and faith unfeigned. May God make your way easy, and you strong with the blessing of Him that overcometh.

II

HE who calls you to-day to be the servant of His servants, His minister and envoy, places you by the same act in your rank and order, one of a great company of men set apart for a like work, and gives you a duty and a responsibility to the great ministerial organisation by which He governs His Church in this land. You become members of the clergy and ministers of the Church of England. Let me put this to you, very shortly, but very closely: not to lower your ideal, but to force the reality upon you, in a moment when none of us, save at the cost of his conscience, can afford to be unreal. The Church of England is, to you and to me, the point and matter of contact, at and by which the great community of the Holy Catholic Church becomes a real, tangible, material fact to our experience. The history of the Church of our fathers is the direct continuation of the history of the Acts of the Apostles. England is not one whit less near to the Mount Sion, the Church of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, than were Corinth, Rome, and Ephesus; the nineteenth century lies before Him whose eye and heart are upon us, on one level plane with the first century or the tenth. The Church of God is a fact,

not merely an idea, and the Church of England is to us directly the Church of God, not, of course, exclusively, not in any way exclusively. We should no more think of denying to the several sects among us the share in Christ that they claim, and that it is His, not ours, to warrant or repudiate, than we should to foreign Churches; but for all that, to us of the Church and clergy, the contact of the Church of England is the direct contact of the Church of God. And it is by and through her order to-day that you become Christ's servants and ministers of her work.

Of course you may exaggerate the importance of this, but you are far more likely at the present day, for several reasons, to think too little of it than to think too much; a spurious liberalism on the one side, a disproportioned idea and arbitrary assumption of catholicity on the other; orthodox intolerance or cosmopolitan laxity; a vain pretension to free thought, an arrogant exercise of self-will, the disruptive force of partisanship, the miserable affectation of conceited isolation, the passion for being abreast with every new fancy, the coxcombry of sceptic or agnostic reserve of judgment; every snare that the pride of intellect, or the indolence that calls itself humility to save itself the exertion of judgment, or the in-

discriminate devotion to particular leaders, or particular modes of work, or particular sides of the truth; a long array of dangers and snares, within the heart and without, in the going out and coming in. Against all these, or against any of them, I do not say that a thorough realisation of your position as ministers of the Church of England can be a sole or sufficient safeguard; but I warn you that it is a necessary part of your safe keeping—a necessary, indispensably necessary, matter to be faced, and continually faced, and to be made a part of your limiting and quickening convictions. And rightly conceived, rightly interpreted, it contains all the rest, or is a key to all the rest; if only you will not be content with the key, but enter in and make real to yourself all that is contained in the treasure.

Remember then that, as officers of a well-organised body, you have guidance to accept for yourselves as well as to be guides to others. The Bible is entrusted to you, not to construct theories from, or to concoct conundrums, but to be the treasury of preaching definite doctrine which you pledge yourselves to as believers and maintainers; your pastoral charge is confided to you, not for you to make personal partisans, or to build up a personal success, but to be guided into

the following of Christ ; your clerical character is given you, not for your own advancement in the world, but for Christ's service in the Church ; your offer of service is accepted in the sense in which it ought to be offered, and God give you grace to make the offering in such way as He can accept. Never let any thing, person, idea, influence, jealousy, grudge, or quip or quirk come between you and your people. Never let any thing, person, idea, influence, ambition, desire, lust, world, or wife, or children, or self, or even the flock of Christ Himself come between you and your Lord. Be humble for yourself, but never humiliate Him ; be true, never pretending to know what you do not know, or to experiences that you have never felt, or to a character that you do not realise, or to a position about which you are yourselves uncertain. The people you live among will see through your unreality ; being far more sharp-sighted as to the evil and false than as to the good and true, as alas we all are, until we have won and worn the more excellent, the most excellent gift. But work, try, and pray to be real, to make your life and work real too, in the full realisation of your calling, your character, your relation to Jesus and your relation to your own people. Keep yourselves pure, for His sake, and theirs, and your own. Keep yourselves

employed, even if it were only to keep yourselves pure ; but much work lies before you. Never give up the attempt to make yourselves, by reading and study of the Scripture, fitter teachers as well as clearer seers of the mind, and more earnest sharers in the longing and travail of Christ. God, who has called us to this, the most important of all works that He entrusts to the hands of men, make you strong and perfect to save your own souls in the doing of His good pleasure.

THE WORLD

I

Therefore, seeing we have received this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not ; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.—2 COR. iv. 1, 2.

THE Church of God stands before and against the world, as the pillar and ground of the truth, the House of God, the Church of the living God ; and every minister of the Church of the living God stands before his fellow-men as claiming to be a representative of the truth and a preacher of the truth, and as, by manifestation of the truth, commending himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. Not that every man's conscience can possibly be a competent judge or test of the truth that is manifested before him, but that he is capable of apprehending the lesson and testing the cogency of the appeal, unless he be one to whom the Gospel is hid, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not.

But of this He who judgeth is greater than His servants, and reserveth the judgment to Himself.

To us the lesson comes, in the Epistle for St. Matthew's Day, as a practical injunction for ourselves; we are to commend ourselves, prove ourselves to be true ministers, by manifestation of the truth, to every man's conscience in the sight of God; and this we are to do, renouncing the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word deceitfully. It is not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, that we preach, ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. The light that shines, as we believe, in our hearts, is, by our ministration, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; and our care in this aspect is to see that by none of the faults, dishonesty, craft, or deceitful handling, we defeat the good purpose of God, of bringing home to men's consciences the light that we are commissioned to manifest to them. The apostle puts the matter in simpler but not more urgent or expressive terms when he urges us to provide things honest in the sight of all men, and let not our good be evil spoken of. Let not your manifestation of the truth be such that it shall be misconstrued — evil spoken of. Of the general cogency of the lesson we are in no doubt; we know the doom of him by whom the

offence cometh, the sin of disgracing, by our life and conversation, the doctrine that we profess to preach ; the duty that lies upon us to beware that neither we ourselves offend nor be the occasion that others offend. Here we are to take care that the way of manifestation of the truth be without offence. Do try not to do the right thing in the wrong way.

But a very natural question arises upon this inculcation or form of caution, and it is a question which comes home to us very often in these days. Who are these people, what is this world, what is its right, its power, its competency, its standard of judgment, before which we are to so approve ourselves that our good shall not be evil spoken of, this conscience of all men that we are to commend ourselves to ? It is an easy question to answer off-hand ; it is not an easy question to face and give a reason and account. The world before and against which we stand is grown, has educated itself into a very different thing, so far as its conception of itself and of the Church goes, from what it was when St. Paul wrote the wonderful epistle from which the text is taken, to the brethren dwelling in one of the most representative cities of the time. Hostile as ever to the law and Spirit of Christ, it has learned the language of Christ ; it has, as indeed it could scarcely help, lifted up some part of its moral and

legal discipline into a measure of conformity with the Gospel ; and it has, with craft enough, come to employ in its resistance to, or aggression upon, the kingdom of Christ, weapons fashioned in imitation of the armoury of the soldier of Christ.

The sovereignty of truth, the absolute necessity of frank sincerity, the law of mutual tolerance, the need of liberty of belief and freedom of thought and worship—all these are conditions which the criticism of the world has borrowed or forged in imitation of the standards of the faith, to use in attacks upon us. And do we not too often fail to meet the judgment that so assails us? Of course, and of very truth we do. We fail to commend ourselves so ; and then it is proclaimed against us, You are condemned by a standard of judgment to which you cannot demur, and your cause perishes with you. You have handled the word that you call the word of God deceitfully ; it perishes with you, for it is only because you have called it so that the world has recognised it as the word of God in any sense. You have maintained a show of honesty, but the hidden springs and motives of dishonesty have betrayed themselves in both your ostensible policy and your universal inconsistency. You have walked in craftiness, your priestcraft and your ministerial claims put your whole existence to shame ; we have

learned our lesson, and we will have none of you. Take yourselves off, and look after the women and children that the manly thinkers of the time cannot find time to care for ; a little longer they may be left you—as soon as they begin to understand, we will free them. Quarrel over your interpretations of the words that you profess to believe to be the Gospel of Peace ; if we take sides it shall be in the certainty that each shall destroy the other. Fight over your worship and ritual ; your very combativeness proves unbelief and not faith, and the sooner comes the pitched battle, the sooner will come the Church of the future, with no creeds, no sacrifice, no Bible, only a peace which so far as you are concerned may mean desolation, but in which we see the infinite expansion of a religion of humanity, a Christianity without Christ, a universe without God.

If I exaggerate verbally, I am not exaggerating substantially : these are the words of the judge who claims to try us by our own law and condemn us and our law together by the conscience to which we fail to commend ourselves. I would not charge all who so criticise us, as if they in the very least degree could realise what they are doing. Many of the comments on the existing state of things are found in casual articles in reviews, in flimsy works of fiction, in the careless, inconsiderate letters of clever men,

never intended for publication ; in the occasional speeches in Parliament, the immediate object of which is so exhaustively sensational that no one would think of mistaking the *obiter dicta* for mature and deliberate judgments ; many of them the mere slang of incompetent people, knowing neither what they say nor whereof they affirm.

But with all these allowances, they are said ; and they are said more openly day by day, in a way perhaps more persistently, in a way that shows, if not more thorough organisation of spiritual anarchism, most certainly a more general idea of emancipation from spiritual discipline, from the equity of criticism, from the courtesy, if not the affectionate respect for the manner and mind of the household of Christ. God help me ; I only do wish, and wish most heartily, that I could see things otherwise.

But you will say to me, "Is there not another side to this ? Is not this hostility on the increase, or the display of it on the aggressive side brought out by the greater activity and energy and striving for peace and purity that marks this age of the Church just as much as these features mark this age of the world ?" Let us see what is to be said to this. I think that we shall find that, so far as it is true, it serves to accentuate, to sharpen the lesson of which I am trying to find a fit form of

expression. It may be that the increase of vigour in the work of the Church is being met by an increase of hostility on the side of the world. Now, our question is, Are we doing our best to hinder that hostility from finding grounds of justification? Well, the increased or revived sense of vitality in the work of the Church does, no doubt, create an increased sense of provocation and hostility on the other side. There is no reason to elaborate historical proof of what the last two centuries of our history abundantly illustrate; the history of the Nonjurors, of the Methodists, of the Evangelical revival, and of the Oxford movement, all read the same way: increase of spiritual energy, whether it be, or be not, exactly the good to which the apostolic warning applies, has on each occasion met with a renewal of hostility; one part of which was what we should call party conservatism, but the great power of which was no doubt in the standing enmity of society, as it is called, to anything that calls upon it to improve and sanctify itself. And the danger, consequently, has always been in the hold which the disproportioned energy of our champions has given to the other side, in enabling them to speak evil of our good. Mind it is our good, I repeat, not our betrayals, not our shortcomings, nor our cowardice, but our good—the truth that we are to

commend by manifestation : all else is no doubt a mischief, as I said, but that which is at stake is not our character, nor our policy, nor our consistency, but the truth which we are to commend to all men's conscience in the sight of God—let not your good be evil spoken of, your manifestation of the truth lay you open to just offence, just reproach. Let not your hold on the sovereignty of truth be evil spoken of ; let not your hold on the unity and purity of the Church be evil spoken of ; let not your hold on the duty of free judgment be misrepresented by your fault.

Well, perhaps the first thing that strikes us is that arrant dogmatism of self-will by which we are tempted to define and over-define matters which are all-important to ourselves, which, it may be, supply a considerable part of the material that energises in us our action on religion, the insistence on the all-importance of the particular formula of doctrine, which first drew us to religious conviction ; good in itself, most true in its place and proportion to the rest of revealed truth—a truth which, in spite of our disproportioned view of it and our temerity in handling it, is, it may be, committed in the manifold all-wise policy of our Lord, for us to maintain in the earthen vessels in and through which we have our treasure and light, but which is not

the whole counsel of God, and cannot be handled as if it were so without opening the way to misconstruction and perversion. I need hardly give instances of doctrines entirely true, and in their intrinsic nature universally held, which have, by becoming watchwords of rebellion, of intolerance, and party warfare, caused the whole fabric of Christian dogma to come into sad peril; but, let us say, the doctrine of justification by faith alone in the Lutheran acceptation, of election and foreknowledge of God in the Calvinist interpretation, of the sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist in the Tridentine definition, of the necessity of conversion, or of Church unity, or of common Catholic solidarity, in the later revivals, which on this side I would not wish to characterise. However true and universal, imbedded in the truth and in one another, each one of these points may be, and indeed is, the arrogant, self-willed, imperative insistence, out of all proportion and in derogation of the concomitant principles, has divided the Church for at least four hundred years, and does so still, to all appearance incurably, inasmuch as each truth so apprehended tends to the disparagement of others; and apparently in the minds of religious leaders involves a moral and spiritual incapacity for seeing the truth, if not also a sin of unbelief and schism in those who

hold aloof from them. Can it be that the hold on the sovereignty of truth runs into a rage for definition? The rage for definition of one doctrine, without relation to its bearing upon the body of the faith, is the first and most grievous opening for the hostility, which it challenges on its own account, and not on behalf of the Church, the existence of which, as authoritative or sufficient in definition, it scarcely condescends to recognise.

Next, and by a short and easy step, comes that mischief of party spirit which does to some extent justify the contempt of those that oppose themselves. Can it be that the desire of corporate solidarity runs into a passion of intolerance of all opposition. Need I speak a word now of the absolute calamity which at this very moment the prevalence of this evil is threatening us with: the destruction of all discipline, the stopping of missionary progress, the confiscation of religious endowments, and, worst of all, the reproach of the gainsayer, See how these Christians hate one another. It is not too much to say, or too hard. Let us pray that the leaven of the Truth and Love may yet prevail against the poison of these controversies.

Well, there is a third thing: that attitude which assumes to itself the position of exalted and judi-

cial serenity above the whole realm of party spirit and dogmatic utterance, which enables it to condemn the spirit and condemn the parties, without committing itself to anything more. Can it be that the desire of impartiality runs into self-approving, high assumption of judicial isolation, content with condemning? And this differs from the two that I have spoken of, in that it has a certain credit with the world that judges us, and is not evil spoken of just in the same way as is the good that is disparaged by untempered or ill-tempered zeal. I would not condemn *a priori* any of those good men whose claim for respect in these days is based, speaking popularly, on their standing aloof from party, but they cannot be set outside judgments because they take on themselves to be judges; and it is not likely that the arrogation of supreme discretion, apart from a thorough justification of their position by experience of learning and of work, will ever enable them to attempt to bring home to men's conscience, in the sight of God, the manifestation of a truth about which the coolness of their judgment works rather in condemning others than in justifying their own handling of the word of God, and yet such an attitude is repellent to the better instincts of all men's consciences. I mention them, however, chiefly

that I may exclude them from the consideration which I am attempting to guide to a conclusion, and indeed I shall say no more ; for are we not all very much in the same predicament : ignorant, weak men, with disproportioned eye-focus as regards truth, seeing in part, and prophesying in part, and yet bound to strain after a futurity of revelation in which that which is in part shall be done away ; and are we not all in positions that make us liable to countless questions that we cannot answer, and called upon for peremptory decisions which we cannot enforce and absolute conclusions that we should find it impossible to authenticate ? Surely it is so ; certainly with me and my fifty-two years of labour and study ; more certainly with you who have yet to learn your responsibility and the right way to bear it. And yet I dare say that there are those among you who would define doctrine and prescribe ritual far more peremptorily than I should dare to do, who have at all events learned to assume to myself the credit for courage to say, "I do not know." But all alike we have comfort in the knowledge that it is not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord that we preach ; and it is to God in His sight that the conscience of men, to whom we have heralded the manifestation, is to be approved or condemned.

Only, O good Lord, let not our short-sightedness, or what our dear and wise friend, the great scholar and champion of the sister Church, calls our "colour blindness"—our lack of the sense of proportion, or our carelessness about the perspective of what falls to us of the power of manifestation—let not our fault justify in the minds of them that believe not the blindness in which they are content that the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ which is the image of God should not shine unto them. Only, our God, prepare and perfect us to realise our place as servants of the faithful, for Jesus' sake. Out of our weakness, when we know how weak we are, He will bring strength, and yet we are not to be content to be weak; with our foolishness He can bring to naught the wisdom of the world, but we are not to be content to be foolish. We see much that is against us, we only see a little of what is against us; but we have our post and our work assigned, and a standard, and a pattern, and a hope that maketh not ashamed. Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief. Send me, guide me, use me, save me for Thy mercy's sake; but surely Thou wilt not suffer any to perish by my fault, surely Thou wilt keep me, for I cannot keep myself, from giving to those whom I love and Thou lovest the occasion of falling.

II

For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.—I COR. i. 22.

THE great theme of the apostle's preaching, and of ours, for all time and in all the world, is put before us in these verses in a position, and historical as well as analytical relations, so remarkably clear and definite, that we feel quite justified in holding it to be one of the most solemn and deliberate expressions of his experience, and a ray of light and key of work for all time. It could hardly have been put clearer as a mathematical theorem. Here are the two great divisions of the world, to which St. Paul had to exhibit the Gospel of salvation—Christ crucified. The Jew disciplined, and trained, and cared for by a thousand years of loving instruction and severe correction and elaborate system of ordinances, and a hope of things to come. The Greek, so far as his history and varied national traditions had taught him, practically and consciously emancipated from any such discipline, training, or extension of hope beyond death. Both with a consciousness of sin and an idea of virtue, but with very different sort of consciousness and very varied notion of a law of life. And

the result had been, with the Jew to produce a peremptory insistence that what was wanted, if anything was, was a certainty about which, once apprehended, there would be no more questioning, and with the cultivated Greek, at all events, to produce a passion of speculative freedom, the claim to develop the good, the beautiful, and the true on lines of his own drawing. So the first point stands—the Jew “requires,” the Greek “seeks.” The whole attitude of the two minds differs. “Show us the Father and it sufficeth us,” “except I see the print of the nails I will not believe,” “they tempted Him, asking a sign from heaven.” We do not say that all who demanded conditions did so like the unfaithful and hostile—certainly neither St. Philip nor St. Thomas did that; but the attitude was an attitude of demand, and not of gracious receptivity, welcoming the word that was given and spoken as the one thing the heart could desire. They might indeed, one and all, say that they had been brought up to expect signs and wonders. So they demand, whilst the Greeks go to seek what the light of nature and the freedom of speculation may find for them; many fine things they demand, for God had not forgotten them; many fine things, but still they seek for some new thing, some philosophy to elaborate and tear to pieces, some complete system to furnish the

materials by its ruin for a still completer one—the good, the beautiful, and the true. The life was a life of seeking as that of the Jew was one of stolid imperturbability, speaking great things, but best content to be let alone. Then, in the second place, the thing needed : to the Jews a sign—something so obviously and logically safe, that neither faith nor any other mental energy need be troubled hereafter, a certainty, a finality, and sufficiency of assurance ; to the Greek wisdom, the highest knowledge caught and formulated by the highest intellect, and opening up into fresh regions of thought and freedom—no finality here, but a perfect freedom for which the Greek's conscience might well believe that he had been made, and trained, and taught, and blessed with eminent success in the glorious result of his speculation in art and science and “wisdom.” It may be that the best instincts of the Jew worked in the direction of demand, and of the Greek in the direction of willing search ; so also did the worst.

And now comes to them the mystery of godliness, the revelation of the crucified, dying, rising, ascended, reigning in heaven, promising a return, and, through the apostle, offering forgiveness of sins and eternal life. And then, what does all this mean ? I asked for a sign from heaven, and you offered me a crucified man, unclean by the

very circumstances of His death—this is not a sign, but a stumbling-block; and on the other side, yes, we are seeking wisdom, but what is there of wisdom, what is there of the good, the beautiful, and the true here? It is not wisdom, it is foolishness, the offer of a victim that we did not want, of forgiveness for what we see not to require forgiveness, a promise of a future which may or may not involve the idea of immortality, but does not, save as a matter of curiosity, fall within the circles of our philosophic conditions; it is foolishness, quite unlike anything that we wanted or anything that we know ourselves to be made for. They receive Him not: to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness. Yet to as many as received Him He gave power to become sons of God. To them that are called, whether Jews or Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God, the crucified, God reigning from the tree, the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, upholding all things by the word of His power, superseding all the signs, meeting the true and justified demand: we have waited for Him and He has come with power. And those who found folly in His wisdom; to them with the conscious sin and failure, the provision of a higher law, the law of an endless life, and the admission to regions

of divine life, idea, divine promise, and certainty, which it had not entered into their heart to desire or conceive, the wisdom of God seen now to incorporate all that nature had yielded to their seeking, and to glorify it with an eternal vitality, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge opened up; to them that are called, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Well, we stop here, we see what it means to the apostle; we see and feel also, I trust, what it means to ourselves: all the preaching of all our lives turns upon it. And we cannot spend, at this moment, time in speculation as to the apparent failure of the discipline of Israel; that means the whole of Old Testament history, as St. Stephen told his murderers, and pretty nearly the rest of the history of the chosen people, whatever may be their share in the revelation of the times of refreshing.

Nor is it a time either to attempt to analyse or to catalogue the points of the philosophy, in which the Gospel strengthens or overthrows the assumptions and conclusions of a freedom, which is not perfect until it becomes a service. And I do not want now to trouble you with oppositions of science or insistentcies of history that have their relations and analogies with the points of which I have spoken; rather let me point out to you practically that whatever was the case of old,

in St. Paul's time and region of work, the moral and mental obstacles which will stand in your way, when, in your parishes and your schools and society generally, you have to put Christ crucified, the power of God, and the wisdom of God, before intelligent people, will almost certainly take one of the two forms, insistence on certainty or intolerance of any check on what the human mind regards as its lawful liberty.

The two things may come together or apart, or mixed up so curiously that a depth of self-incapacitating wilfulness seems to lie at a deeper stratum still; but so it is, so far as I have had experience. The man who demands unfettered liberty for scientific speculation will brandish an argument about the possibility of unclean spirits entering into the herd of swine. The student of sublime theology will draw his line at the decisions of councils, or the principles of canon law—either way, I must see or I will not believe; I will not be driven, I am free to save my own soul.

Or, in a different class, I do not hold with the Church; show me a sign of sacramental working and I will consider it; or let me alone, I do not care about it, or about sin or forgiveness, or an eternal life from which none has ever come back to tell me anything; or anticipations and preparations for things about which all I know is

that I have yet to begin the very first elements of either knowledge or desire ; and, alas, dear friends, the work will bring you across some who will not care enough to tell you that.

You are not prepared to find the preaching of Christ crucified an easy work, or the proving in His accomplished work the fulness of the power or the wisdom. It is not likely that you should ; you are going with experience of your own to earn ! true, but however old you may grow, and however many experiences you may earn, you will not find it easy. Take one thought now and look it in the face. Picture it to yourself, realise it to yourself ; you want to preach Christ crucified—the Saviour from sin and death. The crucified drawing men by the need of salvation and the conviction of sin. How shall you begin—how shall you end it ? The need of the Saviour realised by the sense of sin, the first note of the calling. To the Jews and Greeks alike the call must begin with the apprehension of the need. When and where in it shall the power and wisdom come in evidence — the sense of sin, the curse of sin, the infection, the unforgettable knowledge of the first breach with truth and purity, and the shame of conscience awakened. We call this the sense of sin : but it is much more than that ; it is the sense of a

present judge trying, and of a present friend and comforter grieving, and of a present crucified Lord offering forgiveness and strength to sin no more. There is forgiveness. And the trust in the forgiveness is a part of the call which comes to those to whom the Crucified is the power and the wisdom. There is forgiveness and there is recognition, and the beginning of love. And then comes time and other temptation, and even easier failure, and less appreciated pardon. And so in recurring and widening series, for one sin does not dominate the soul without parasites and satellites; we cannot forget, we cannot feel forgiveness, we strive, and sometimes we conquer, sometimes we do not, and we wonder what was or is the experience of the saints. It is a short story, but it comes into most lives, modified by physical constitution, or by education, or by hard, early struggles; but lightly or heavily, strongly or weakly, it comes into them, each human soul that has a consciousness of being a soul, having a memory, or a conscience, goes through this much. As the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine; the soul that sinneth, it shall die, the soul which sees the Crucified shall live. But of a surety, and for ever for them that obey the call, will come the love that opens up the revelation of the glory and the wisdom.

How many of your people will see Him and live? something, and that not an easy something, will depend on you, your word of counsel and rebuke, most of all your word of comfort—God be gracious to you. Well, you say to me, the text was very cheering, the conclusion of the sermon is very depressing; very likely, I dare say it is, and, indeed, I feel sure that the apostle himself found it, occasionally, a somewhat hard matter to get the magnificence and the glory of the manifestation brought into such focus that the poor Jews and Greeks of Corinth could see what it meant or might come to mean to them. I am sure that he met many Jews who only asked for signs in the hope of puzzling him, and many Greeks who would not have seen any difference between folly and wisdom, even if they had found it. But, beloved, he was not working alone; the Holy Ghost was in him, with him, and upon him, a physician recognising every man's case, constitution, and history, and sending the word that he was empowered to speak, straight to the conscience, the case, and the cure. Even with that, all are not brought in; but He is with the man who tries, and will put into the heart a wakening and conviction, when His servant throws himself on His help. Ah yes, indeed, and often when He does not, for

we do not strive alone, and sometimes we do not strive at all.

It is for this gift that you are coming to-day. I do not say that we speak and think with humility about it; it is with a lower sense than our own unfitness; it is of our own almost, I would say, "non-entity." We cannot see what He will do by us; let Him do with us all that He will.

Have I been speaking as if the sense of sin was the only key to the calling, the desire of repentance the seal of forgiveness, the ascertaining our own need of salvation the revelation of the fulness of the power and wisdom? Our Father surely has ways that we cannot trace or number, by which He brings to Him who is lifted up men to be drawn into Him. We can love the purity, the glorious truth, and spiritual beauty of the Lord; and the sense of sin, itself the result of varied experiences, may come in varied ways and measures, nay, does so come to every soul that feels it, and we know that often and often it pierces deepest those who have taken the most care to keep themselves from it. But, for all that, we remember, it is Christ crucified whom we preach, it is Christ *crucified* who to the called is the power and wisdom; and why crucified? *for sin, for our sins, and yours, and*

theirs, the whole of whose iniquity was laid upon Him. We seek Him in His beauty and majesty, but we begin to seek Him because we want *the crucified*, and when our eyes are opened we find all the rest. And so we preach Him, not the founder of Christianity, the competitor with Socrates and Buddha, but Christ crucified—verily and indeed the desire, and desirable chosen treasure, the desire of all nations—verily and indeed the Maker of the new earth and the new heavens; but *first and foremost* the *crucified*, and then to those who obey the call, the fulfilment of all the signs and the contentment of the desires that are to grow into the possibility of holding Him so revealed. So we preach, so we have believed.

THREE ADDRESSES ON THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

I

I DESIRE to use the few minutes devoted to the address this morning for an attempt to put before you my idea of the frame and attitude in which we all ought to approach the study of the word of God, and in which it is especially needful for us to train ourselves, who are by our office bound to the constant practice of that study, and have to answer the questions and to some extent direct the work of those who give themselves to the same. In what I am going to say I do not intend any specific or exclusive reference to the subject of what is called the Higher Criticism of the Holy Scriptures. It is very possible that it is in reference to that form of study that my counsels to you may have the greatest practical importance, but what I shall say will have a wider and more general intention of application.

I will begin with laying it down as a fact that the Bible cannot be treated as any other book. First, it is not like any other book; no other book comes to us with a claim authorised by the

Church of our Baptism as containing the word of God, or containing so constant assertion of its claim to be heard as the word of God ; or as cited, one part of it by another part, by a sort of mutual testimony, as of divine authority ; or as consistently upheld by the long consent of the Christian ages as the law and the testimony. So it comes to us, and it is not reduced to the level of other books even by the complete repudiation of every point of this claim at the hands of those who would treat it otherwise. This means that it is to us a paramount witness of truth ; if it fail, if the Lord Jesus Christ is not in it and through it all, the key and binding-string and central truth that holds it all together, then the result of its promulgation is the most ghastly of all delusions and disappointments, by which all the best instincts of human nature are repelled and belied, a phantasm by which he who would deceive us would be no fit object of worship, even if he should exist at all. A book which comes to us thus cannot be like any other.

Secondly, our own relation to it is such that we could not treat it so. We have been brought up in profound respect for and love of it ; we have been taught to base all our faith in the unseen world upon it ; our convictions or anticipations of eternity ; our belief in immortality ; our ideas

of the government of the world; of the existence of God; of His law of life, right, and virtue; of our own subjection to, and inability to keep that law; of the love that provided a way to forgiveness and restoration; of the work of the atonement, of the incarnation and the sacrifice, of the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment, of the destiny of our own souls and of theirs without whom happiness in its true perfection is altogether inconceivable;—in a word, our knowledge, if we call it knowledge, our apprehension, if we dare not call it knowledge, of all that is desirable, hopeful, and other than miserable in this life and that which is to follow—our very simplest ideas of virtue and happiness, justice, purity, and truth. All has come to us through the teaching of this book, or through the teaching of those who based their teaching upon it, through the Church which carries it open in her hand as her witness. It is impossible for those who have been so taught to put themselves into a neutral or impartial position regarding it without such a strain, such a wrench of mental and moral force, as drives them past the central station of fair judgment. The effort that alone can carry us so far carries us further. The very attempt to leave the post of affirmation carries us so far beyond the point of indifference as to set us near, and in progress towards negation. In ordinary

language indifference towards Holy Scripture means disregard of it. We cannot treat it as any other book ; if we try, we find that we are treating it as no other book ; as far the other way as we started on the other ; and indeed it is the fact that it is like no other that has led the critics to apply to it methods of arbitrary and conjectural criticism which, applied to Greek or Roman or even Anglo-Saxon literature, would have been laughed out of court.

We are forced in the recoil as far in the direction of negation as we started in the direction of affirmation ; no tenable standing-ground between belief and unbelief. This, I think, is certain of our own experience, and it is not uncharitable to say that where men have flattered themselves into the belief that they can do it, it has been at the penalty of self-deception, which not all their professions of love and honour have been able to keep innocuous to themselves or free from great danger to those who are led by them. The claims of the Bible and our own relation to it alike make the attitude of indifference impossible, untenable, intolerable. But there is something to be said on the other hand. First, the Bible, although speaking with authority, speaks with an authority that contemplates proof and deliberate acceptance ; second, we, unless our

acceptance is to be servile and abjectly unintelligent, are bound to do our utmost to realise both what we believe and how and why we believe it. That is to say, the Book itself recognises, and we by our very constitution of thought and affection are bound to the exercise of what it recognises, the necessity of judgment, the proving and holding fast. If these two considerations now formed a dilemma, the only possible attitude of thought would be an agnosticism, which long before this would have set the Bible and all religious ideas drawn from it outside the region of practical questioning. Either it must be accepted with the mechanical receptiveness of an empty vessel, or it must be treated as on a level with a review article; it must long ago have lost the hold on the heart which, humanly speaking, is the result of the experience of nineteen centuries of faith. The two considerations do not constitute such a dilemma; so much is clear to our apprehension of what is going on in the world now, in commentary, in controversy, in exposition, in application.

We will now ask what is the attitude of approach. I may perhaps arrange the counsels that I offer under two heads: the approach requires a moral or spiritual effort, and a mental or intellectual one. I prefer the words spiritual and mental, but as I am not a philosopher, or

speaking to philosophers, I shall not try to restrict myself to philosophical expressions. There is to be an effort of the will, the heart, and soul, and spirit, and there is to be an exercise of the mind, its logical, critical faculties.

First, the student of Holy Scripture must approach it with a living and loving sense of what he owes to it; it is the exponent of the influences by which his spiritual life has been guided to the point at which he approaches the study; it would not be a matter of consideration with him at all if it were not so. He is a religious man, and this book is the witness of the religion which has made him what he is, and made him also desirous of growth into knowledge. His attitude is of grateful acceptance and, correspondingly, of prayer for guidance. He holds the book with a loving trust, a loving, trustful receptiveness; whatever mental trials await him, whatever spiritual struggles he may anticipate, he holds his Bible as the gift of his Lord's love, on the authority of his Saviour's use of the Old Testament and sanction of the New; on the evidence of the Church, which is to him the pillar and ground of the truth. He comes, then, with the desire to prove true what his experience and education, what we humbly believe the guidance of the Holy Spirit within him, disposes him to

believe to be true. It is with a loving trust in the Giver and the gift of the divine word, a trust implicit as loving, that he is using and proving as the Lord Himself would have him use and prove, and as the Holy Spirit is leading.

Next, the attitude spiritually is one of patience : Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth. He longs to hear more, to hear more clearly, to see the spirit through the letter, to get to comprehend with a clear comprehension, to reconcile all difficulties ; and yet he is conscious that both by the imperfectness of his own powers and the incompleteness of his own faith, as well as by the possible reticence of Almighty power in revelation, there is much that he must wait for : seeming contradictions that he cannot harmonise ; promising vistas of loving anticipation that for the present seem to him to close in obscurity ; records of events and prophecies of events that need to be brought into correlation with each other, and with the general purpose of revelation, and with the course of the history of the Church and the world, which tease and try him, as they have done the ages before him, and will, it may well be, continue to do so until the end come. His attitude is of patience ; it is a patience that will not be overcome either by the impetuosity of love or by intolerance of suspense. He will not say, "Except I see the

print of the nails, I will not believe"; but "I will not let Thee go until Thou bless me." I will worship the God whom I know as an unknown God, rather than refrain from the worship which I know to be true, scarcely knowing why. "I will wait for Thy loving kindness;" I must wait, but it shall not be without. "I will wait in the midst of Thy Temple;" I will wait as those who watch for the morning.

And, need I add, the fruit of trustful patience is humility, and the result of it is the increase of the power of trustful receptiveness: they that eat Me shall yet be hungry, and they that drink Me shall yet be thirsty; and the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. The knowledge so sought has ever-developing application. The sense of one's own fallibility in faith and apprehension is an element of the humility of the loving receptiveness. I would know more, that I may love better, and, loving better, may try to be more like Him who in His word, and by His word, reveals Himself. May God grant to you and to me the power to make the will exert itself under these conditions. I might have summed it all up in the one expression—the attitude of prayer, desiring, waiting, trusting.

Now of the mental or intellectual feature or

side or aspect of study : Given a book which, as I have said, on its own claims, and on the ground of our personal relation to it, is unlike any other book. How can we criticise it ? Does criticism require a position of such indifference as by itself amounts to unfriendliness ? Must all criticism begin from the angle of negation ? or how about the parallels and analogies on which the laws of true criticism are based ? or how about the nature of the proof which is to be demanded, and with or without which the mind of the student, studying trustfully and lovingly, is or is not to be contented ? How, too, about the theories of inspiration and the questions of scientific, literary, and historic criticism ? And what of the relation between spiritual and devotional study and the results of those sorts of questionings ? Far be it from any of us to say that these questions are simple, or that it is easy to formulate an answer that will satisfy all. There is a criticism which analyses and distinguishes in the hope of making that which is obscure in belief clear and coherent. There is a criticism which, starting from an un-trustful standing-point, calls everything into question and assumes the truth of every negative argument, the equal cogency of every new conjecture. Need I caution you against this latter ?

However, first, we must remember that, as different subject matters are only capable of, or amenable to, different methods of proof, we must not look for equal logical cogency in all conclusions from the tests or evidences applied to the Bible, either in its several parts or as compared with other books. It is only in mathematical matters that perfect demonstration can be asked for, and the Bible is not a mathematical book.

The nearest approach to such demonstration in other subjects belongs to what is now called natural science, and some of the weapons alleged against the theories of inspiration of the Bible are drawn from the scientific armoury. With respect to these, I will only say that the Bible uses scientific terms only for the purpose of helping a revelation of the power and energy and will of the Almighty, a revelation that must, to be a revelation at all, be made in language intelligible to those to whom it was made, and which, accordingly, must be open to the limitations of human speech and language. As it is a growing revelation, it is liable to variety of interpretation as knowledge of scientific matters increases, and that interpretation is susceptible of readjustment as time goes on. The original word, cleared of the incrustation of successive interpretations, is simple, and its purpose being admitted,

lies outside of scientific criticism ; and yet before the demand can be made that it should be surrendered as less than perfectly true, science should be called on to produce a theory more reasonable, more in accord and consistent with its own manifold demands than the theory of a personal creator and a definite period of creation supplies. This, I think it no treason to truth to affirm, no system of science has yet satisfactorily done. Whether or no the Mosaic account of creation can or ever will be reconciled with the discoveries of physical science, it is surely clear that no system of physical science has yet provided or can be expected to provide a theory of causation or motive power which is more intelligible or reasonable than that of the first chapter of Genesis ; the whole cosmogony of evolution can offer only to trace and disentangle the links of a chain, the origination and maintenance of which depend on causes that are as much beyond it as they are beyond the reach of any other effort of human thought. The whole array of modern philosophy, negative or positive, hypothetical or inductive, has not got nearer to the solution of the problem of existence than the schoolmen of the middle ages. But that I must leave ; a conjecture which is not disproved is not therefore proved, and a theory which is not proved is not therefore disproved.

As to the historic and literary criticism, on which I do not intend to detain you now, one may ask, how can you apply the principles of such an art to a subject which is without a parallel? And where will you find a parallel to this? Seek it in the sacred books of the East, what do you find there? Nothing to be compared with it or parallel to it except the fact that they are sacred books, which, if they claim to be older than the Bible, simply prove that its antiquity is not an impossible one; if they are more modern, they prove that they have no atom of the spirit in which we recognise inspiration. I am very sure that the true result of archæological inquiry as to the history of the most ancient nations is the proof that, so far as literary possibilities are concerned, there is nothing at all that could refute the claim to which the Hebrew literature, as we call it, makes or has made for it to the antiquity on which its authenticity so largely depends. If the literatures of Egypt and Assyria are older than the Pentateuch, they would prove that there was no impossibility in assigning the authorship to Moses; if the Sanscrit and Chinese books are older or younger, they prove only that the spirit that was in the prophets is not in them. Here and there there may be a spark of primitive light, but there is nothing whatever of the conviction of

sin and righteousness and judgment. Nor does literature prove anything of importance if we recognise that the very necessity of intelligible transmission involves an adaptation to the intelligence of the transmitters.

Of historic, as distinct from properly literary criticism, I would be the last man in the world to speak with the rashness of dogmatism. Historical criticism is a very patient study, with a very cautious method, very suspensive conclusions. History itself is a research, and a research constantly expecting and receiving revision; and it must be so by the very limitation of human knowledge in the region of matters with which it is most conversant, the very variety of human records differing with the angle of vision the means and capacity of every recorder. The criticism of the Bible from this point of view, the point of historic analogies, is full of risks; conjecture is very tempting when and where the conjecturer is sure that his guess can be met only by another guess, or by the enunciation that guessing is unphilosophical, if the acceptance of old theory is unphilosophical too. The very idea of the guess involves a tacit suspicion of the authority as it stands. But I will not puzzle you or myself with abstract terms. There is a destructive criticism; such criticism is lawful within certain limits; wherever it has been

applied to the Holy Scriptures it has essentially failed. There is a constructive criticism which, within a definite area, is lawful too ; this has been applied to Holy Scripture, and has resulted in a sort of confirmation of some of the evidences that have been regarded as important. There is a criticism, destructive by conjecture and constructive by conjecture, intended to supply the place of that which is destroyed. Against such, its methods and its conclusions, I would warn all who wish for the confirmation of the faith, whether of themselves or others. It is a wanton, irresponsible sort of temptation to shake other men's faith by vain conjectures. We can, we will, we must have no trifling with the word of God. It is a worse thing, terribly worse, when, treating conjectures as conclusions, we challenge the whole of the accepted evidence of the creeds on the truth of such considerations ; worst of all, inconceivably, beyond limit of patience or silence from protests when we admit conjecture as against the word of Him who is the Truth.

The mental attitude of the student is like his spiritual attitude, one of trust, patience, and humility. He comes to the study prepared to dispense with mathematical demonstration ; prepared to be content with suspensive conclusions ; prepared to listen to without accepting plausible analogies ; prepared to be puzzled with unreason-

able conjectures within the area of sincere criticisms. But he comes also with his mental attitude determined, as I have said, and in a faith which he prays and waits to have assured. It is a reasoning and a reasonable faith, but it is a faith notwithstanding, not a mere intellectual apprehension ; itself of the substance of things hoped for, of the evidence of the things not seen : the assurance of the things hoped for, which shall be demonstrated and determined, reconciled and explained ; the proving of things not seen, which, when they shall be seen face to face, will have solved all questions.

II

Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord. —2 COR. iii. 17, 18.

It is a thought that must have occurred, must, I think, *really* have occurred to every one reading the Bible for practical purposes, and occurred *very often* ; and it certainly does occur to all who read it and look on the religion of it, one may say, from the outside : how very far are Christians, the best and most perfect, from realising in their life and conduct the minutiae of the letter of the example of the Saviour ; how far are clergymen,

the best and most faithful, from reproducing, in character or working, the details of the imitation, of the literal fulfilment, of the precepts even, of Him and His apostles. There is no mistake about it. We have wondered from time to time, putting the matter on lower grounds, what would St. Paul say if he were to visit London to-day? We might put it lower still, and with a later comparison, what would King Alfred or William of Wykeham say if he were to come to Oxford now?

Yet we do know that, in all the process of the ages, the men who have worked for Christ and have maintained religion in the world have worked in the full belief that they were working in the mind of Christ; and, just as much the great teachers of the schools have been following, in the path that historic development wrought for them, the great principles of the philosophy that lives by attempting higher knowledge on an ascent, rising and widening as it rises towards the ideal of truth, although the paths along which they have travelled have seemed divergent and, indeed, have been so. They have believed it, and the results have justified them. And wise men have recognised that so it must be; that there is a development of mental and material influences in the world that works, under the good providence of God, in lines and curves, that, however they may

be modified, are not *intrinsically* moulded by the teaching of religion; that the Church lives in a world which grows in its own way, that way being only occasionally and partially affected by the influence of the Church; whilst the Church cannot help, on the other hand, being occasionally and in varied measure affected *by the influence* of the world, and having to adapt its warfare, aggressive and defensive, to the tactics of the organisation against which it has to struggle.

And so we cannot help seeing that the details of the life of an apostle, as they were exhibited in the first century, would have worked very little or very differently from the way in which they did work had they been reproduced in the sixteenth, or even in our own, which prides itself on having eliminated historic circumstance to so great an extent from the philosophic appreciation of character and of progress. And we may go further, with halting step and eyes downcast, and ask whether, if Jesus of Nazareth had come in these days as He came in those, came to His own, not to be received, His appearance would have stirred the people or worked such effect as it did when He came in the days of Tiberius Cæsar.

Well, sometimes we try to force the example of the Lord and the application of His precepts into interpretations that they will not bear, and complain

that they fail to apply to the condition of our own days, and are of no meaning in practical life ; more often we treat them as full of meaning indeed, but only as examples and counsels of perfection so far above us that we need not do more than admire. And then we are told, You might as well have tried the experiment of following them. Try now to reproduce in England or in Europe generally the life of St. Peter or St. Paul, or try to call back one of the days of the Son of Man ; surely He cannot have meant that in this way you should desire to see one of them, and should not see it. And so we are, it may be, discouraged now and then as to the imitation of Christ, and tempted to the belief either that the things so inapplicable cannot be true, or that we who cannot make them true are made for naught. Why cannot you try the experiment now, as they say ? It might be truly replied, So attempts have been made from time to time in history, so in some parts of the mission field they are being made now ; but the results have been as they have been seen to be : in the former case fruitless energies of unpractical asceticism, in the latter that measure of success which could be achieved only where the circumstances in which the attempt is made have a substantial likeness to the circumstances in which the example was set. And yet,

beloved, as I said before, the word of the Gospel of Christ *has* proceeded, and *has* been glorified, in the lives and deaths of men, and in the history, the perils, temptations, and victory of the Churches; of men as unlike St. Peter and St. Paul as were Hooker and Laud, and in Churches as unlike the Seven Churches of Asia as were those of Greece, Italy, and England.

For our heavenly Father has given us in the fulfilment of the promise of His Son, a power and life and energy and guide, of faith and practice, of combat and of harmony, of developing sufficiency to meet the growing self-sufficiency of the human heart and of the world that concentrates and idealises and marshals its growing powers, even by the Spirit whom He has given us working out the manifold wisdom of God. Let us not be afraid to put it so. Our Father has given us, by His Spirit, the power to reproduce, in our life and time, somewhat not so much of what He was seen to be and to do, but of that which the Lord Jesus would have been and done if He had taken our nature in the days and conditions in which we are called on to live; the Holy Ghost is given us to make us something like what Christ would have been if He had come in our day. And surely this may well be in our minds at a time like this, when I am bidden to

lay my hands on so many of you and say, "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God now committed unto you by the imposition of our hands." The words are very awful words, and the act is a very awful act; as in confirmation, when the spirit of adoption is asked for and given, so in ordination the special purpose of the gift is the special adaptation of the receiver for the work, the battle with himself, the struggle with the world that is against him, the determined hold on the flock, which our Master and Shepherd has given us out of the world; the power and the love and the sound mind in which we are to accomplish those things that He would have done to the praise and glory of His name and the salvation of His people, to do what He would have done in the way in which He would have it done.

The gift of the Holy Ghost, I repeat, is given us to help us to do what Christ in our circumstances would have done, and to meet with the manifold wisdom of God the infinite variety of the changes of the world, and thought, and character, which affect without changing the nature, the souls of men.

You may say to me, "But is it not the powers of the priesthood of Christ that are in a measure conferred by the gift of the Spirit in ordination—

be thou a faithful dispenser of the powers that are committed, the authority, the priestly character, the ecclesiastical status, the share that is given of the power of the world to come." Of course that is the first idea, but the first idea carries with it the second: the *unworthy* priest may efficiently celebrate the Eucharist, or pronounce absolution, or preach the word the belief in which is not in him; but he does not do it as Christ would do it, or would have it done—with the purity and the sympathy and the self-surrender, and the life given consciously and efficiently for the flock that he serves. We need to do the work of Christ in the mind of Christ; to fulfil our course of priesthood not merely in the mitre and the ephod, but in the Spirit of Him who is holy, harmless, undefiled, made separate from sinners, higher than the heavens, yet close to the unthankful and evil, the unclean and selfish, the sinners from whom He is separated, the servants in whose behalf He made Himself of no reputation. Then you will say to me, Are we really to conceive a possibility of the Lord Jesus taking our place in the fashion of an English clergyman, a graduate of Oxford or Cambridge? Surely it is a grotesque way of putting what, no doubt, is a spiritual truth of much significance, but is it quite serious, is it quite wise? Well, beloved, I think it is; I think that, however

weakly we realise it, we ought not to be content without trying to realise what all this means, and how it comes to mean it, and how it is to be made a reality as well as an ideal. "But do you really mean that any of us can exhibit the image of Christ?" What else can I mean? What else does St. James mean by looking into the perfect law of liberty and continuing therein; or St. John by telling us that, as He is, so are we in this world; or St. Paul by speaking of the beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord and being changed into the same image—and how, even as by the Spirit of the Lord?

Yet we have, we know, the treasure in earthen vessels; the glass in which we too continue our conscious efforts to realise our likeness dazzles our eyes, if it be not itself shattered. It is only here and there, and now and then, with here a little and there a little, one single virtue that we try to make our leading principle, one single verse that, with lisping tongue and stammering lips, "I said I will take heed to my ways," for instance, in which we so try to show to our conscience and to our fellow-servants our convictions of life and truth. Is that all that there should be? Nay, indeed, yet if even that is there, there is more with it: the Holy Spirit that quickens us even to see and take in

the broken light, and to repeat with stammering tongue that which is the truth in Christ, does not leave us to complete the circle of virtue without His help ; He is guiding into all truth, and nerving us for all virtue, till we may come to the measure of the stature of the fulness, of which these our little efforts are like the steps of children who are just learning to walk. We need not limit our aspiration to the span of our earthly years ; the days of eternity lie before those who shall awake up after His likeness, and those who have been faithful in a little shall be glorified in the pursuit of the infinite, through the ages of ages, by Christ our Lord. Well, we say, all this is too wonderful and excellent for us ; we are not even sure that we have the desire for so great things ; we are but on the threshold ; the power to feel the desire, how far has it originated and how far has it grown in us ? The desire, and the power, and the growth, and the persistence, are of the gift of the Holy Spirit, and He has brought us thus far. He has brought you thus far ; receive not the grace of God in vain.

Has not the experience of your own lives brought you across some, clergymen and laymen, men and women, whose characters have set before you some portion of the likeness after which you are striving ; of the love into which your Lord would draw you ? Surely it has. Have you not known some one at

least in whose presence it seemed impossible for you to utter an unclean, a sordid, even a questionable word; or some one in whose company you dare not say an unkind word, even of one who deserved it; or some one who lived so clearly above the world that whilst intimately knowing what was going on in his own circle, and intensely sympathetic and impressible with the good and the evil of it, he was, to all intents and purposes, untainted and impregnably fenced off by a divine effluence from all infection of the evil, breathing wholesome life and influence everywhere without effort; some, too, whose manliness was after the manliness of Christ, and as bravely opposed to the shamefulness of the world, in circumstances of trial so very unlike the Lord's; some whose whole life has been the bearing of other men's burdens, and the abolishing of the evil consequences of other men's sins, and the suffering for their sakes, which is the nearest way of entering into the sufferings of the Man of Sorrows? I have known such in many varieties of phase, plain, hearty, genial, business-like men, refined and fastidious scholars, great men as the world counts greatness in rank and position, and very humble people doing their work as if they hardly thought that they were doing anything for the Lord, simply for their children and their friends; and some full of zeal, to whom con-

sciously everything they did was done as unto the Lord. By such manifold expressions of His working does the image of Christ recur among the windy ways of men.

You, beloved, have this before you. You will go down from this church this morning with new power from on high; you do not doubt it; I do not doubt it, however the world may deny it or ignore it. We recognise the dignity and the weightiness, the responsibility of the charge committed to you. Take then authority. Receive the Holy Ghost. God will not repudiate your acts done in His name; but He will judge *you* according to the way in which the character He impresses on you is justified in your life and work. He will not abide divided hearts and feet that go two ways, and a renunciation of one side of the world's attractions coupled with an eager devotion to another side which is still as much of the world worldly. God forgive us if in saying such things we are condemning ourselves. His word stands true, and He is the judge before whom we stand or fall; but the truth must be spoken, and to you it is spoken in this most solemn hour of your life—now. You are to execute your office for Christ in the might and manner of the Spirit; to show, in the busy, or frivolous, or impatient, or laborious world, in which you are to work, a love that can com-

prehend the difficulties, the influences, the temptations, the sins that are incident to it ; to show the strength, the valour, the patience, the loyalty of the true-hearted, having it in yourself, not merely wearing it as your uniform, having it in yourself in the faith of Christ, and realising the work of the Holy Ghost in you in constant prayer. For we do not imagine that even the Holy Spirit, who is given you, will work through you without your use of the proper means of training yourselves, and obtaining His counsel in the ways in which He provides counsel. He will nerve and guide but not supersede the natural exertion of your regenerate powers. He will tell you what to do on the occasion of action or what to say on the occasion of speech, but He will have you take pains to prepare yourself for ready action when it may be called for, and for ready speech when the hour comes to break the patience of silence. He will have you live praying ; always, in every place, in every movement, in rest, and in work, keeping communion with Him who thus is with you even to the end of the world. And now this is the conclusion of the whole matter as from me to you to-day. I would puzzle you with no more complex consideration. Let it be this : continue instant in prayer. Such trust have we through Christ to Godward ; not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything

as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God, who also hath made, and is making us, and will make and keep us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter but of the Spirit, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

III

It will not, I hope, distract your thoughts from the great matter about which we are directly engaged this week, if I ask you to give your attention for a few minutes this morning to a great question of theology, about which the minds of men are just now grievously exercised. You are, of course, all aware that the recent investigations into the history of the Old Testament, which are known by the name of the Higher Criticism of the Scriptures, have brought some of our leading scholars to what seem to them certain conclusions as to the authorship of various books of the Bible. Some of these conclusions appear very startling, and indeed are difficult to reconcile with the expressions used in the New Testament about those books, and even with the words which our Lord Himself is recorded to have used in citing them. If, it follows, the Evangelists truly record the words that our Lord spoke, and those words, not being a mere condescension to popular ignorance or to

the exigency of argument, imply a belief on the Saviour's part in the literary authorship of the books cited which is contrary to proved or provable decision of criticism, then our Lord Himself was ignorant of the true state of the facts, and His words were formally, if not substantially, fallible. That would mean that, although His use of the citations as the word of God was substantially justified, His ascribing them to the particular writers, Moses, David, and so on, was not. And therefore that our Lord was ignorant. But if He was ignorant of such matters, it must follow that He was not, in His incarnation and life on earth, exempt from ignorance in other matters, although with respect to His moral and doctrinal teaching He must be credited with perfect and infallible knowledge. In illustration of this certain passages are alleged, such as those in which St. Luke describes his increase in wisdom and stature, and St. Mark records his own expression about the knowledge of the Father and ignorance by the angels and by the Son about the day and the hour "when the Son of Man shall be seen coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory." It being thus supposed that the knowledge of the Son of Man was limited during His sojourn on earth, it is scarcely a step further to allege that in other respects His divine power was

limited, and that accordingly, when He prays, He prays in some uncertainty as to how His prayer will be answered, and, when on the Cross He cries out in His agony, He is under the misgiving that the Father has forsaken Him. I am putting this as briefly as I can, and I must at once advance to what is the apparent inference, namely, that the Son, the divine word, consubstantial and co-eternal with the Father, and so possessing all knowledge and all power, becoming incarnate for us men and our salvation, emptied Himself of certain qualities of Godhead, divested Himself, by the act of becoming man, of the possession of all such knowledge and power as would be out of the reach of the most exalted and perfect humanity; and so, notwithstanding the union of perfect Godhead and perfect manhood in His one person, made Himself ignorant of certain things which as God He knew, and incapable of certain acts which as God He was almighty to do. This theory of an act of self-emptying, or *κένωσις*, for I may as well use the expression which recent debates have made so sadly familiar to us, and which is based on Philippians ii. 8—this theory of an act of kenosis, understood to involve the consequences which I have described, of ignorance of certain truths, of growth from ignorance to wisdom, of actual uncertainty about the results of prayer, and actual incapacity to do certain acts, the divest-

ing Himself of the consciousness of perfect oneness with the Father, may be opposed to or contrasted with another theory, which I believe to be true, and to be the theory of the Catholic faith. That is that our blessed Lord, God and Man, did during the whole period of the incarnation on earth, as still in His incarnation in heaven, possess consciously all the power and the knowledge which He has with the Father ; that His humbling Himself, His kenosis, consisted in His divesting Himself of the exercise of those qualities through the humanity which He assumed ; that His growth implied His learning as men learn, to know as men know, and to earn experience as men earn it by suffering, learning, knowing, and suffering what as God He knew well, but what, having come to identify Himself with man, He had to learn as man, for us men and for our salvation. Thus in a way He emptied Himself, thus in a way He divested Himself, thus in a way He limited Himself ; not, as it seems to me, by a single act of incapacitating, but by a continued exercise of self-restraint or a suspension of the exercise of divine power—a fulfilment of conditions as to the use of powers, and manifestation of glories, in and through humanity, to last until He was, in His humanity, glorified with the glory that He had with the Father before the world was.

This theory, for such I must call it, satisfies, so far as we are capable of seeing, the difficulties of the case ; if there was anything that the Incarnate Son could not do, the incapacity grew from the condition under which He had resolved to do His work ; if there was anything which was not His to give, it was something which, by the condition under which He was keeping His resolution, was reserved for the Father ; if there was anything which He could say that He did not know, it was something which, under the condition which He was observing with Himself and the Father, no one, not the angels, nor the Son, the Father only knew ; for it is as the Divine Word that the Saviour refuses to speak. How the Father's perfect knowledge of a point, the fixedness of which would seem to us to limit His divine freedom of action, can be reconciled with it ; how, in fine, we can evaluate the common measure by which God's way of knowing can be compared with ours ; what that is which the Father knows and the Son not, it is not ours to ask ; only we know that the Church has lived for 1800 years not knowing, yet trusting, not having seen or heard, but yet believing.

This doctrine of the perfect possession but continued restraint of divine powers by the Son of Man during the thirty years of His mortal life

does not allow of any imputation of ignorance or incapacity. If such imputation be once admitted, notwithstanding all argumentative safeguards and compensating considerations, the great Gospel of Grace and Salvation is touched, even the corner-stone, and on whomsoever it falls it shall grind him to powder. Such considerations may make the theory safer in the hands of a theological expert, but will, like all such explanations, be ultimately disregarded by those who either follow his conclusions or advance logically upon them. Grant it; and then, could Jesus of Nazareth forget, could He mistake, could He become confused in argument, could He be consistent in all His teaching, could He be Himself deceived? Grant it; and what safeguard have we that He did not forget, was not mistaken, or confused, or inconsistent, or Himself deceived?

I hear it said, Well, if it is so, let it be so, let God be true and every man a liar; if the old Gospel be not as we have received it, true, let us abide by our convictions, let us live on our conclusions, let us see our way to the God who must be above the cloud of doctrine, of theory, aye, of fable that is round about the tradition, the intuition of His existence. Ah, indeed! and is all the glory of the Gospel, all the life of the Church, all the experience of the saints, all the discipline of the

past, all the hope of eternity, as it has been given us, to pass away? What has become of the atonement between God and man, for which God became man, and learned man, and sorrowed and suffered and died, realising the nature and the sins and the sorrows and the sufferings of all the human race, and identifying Himself with the race and every individual of the race, as if He Himself were those whom He died for, their sins and their sufferings and their deaths His own. For He was made sin for us who knew no sin, as He learned obedience by suffering, whose will is one with His Father's, so that He need not have suffered to learn to obey, and who in His divine impassibility is beyond suffering, only in His divine love draws near to us and draws us to Him.

Is it not the surpassing mystery of the Incarnation, as the divine mystery of the atonement, that our Lord God, the word, the effulgence of the Father's glory and the express image of His person, becoming man in the ineffable conception, becomes man with the whole forces of Godhead applied to the consummation of His work; not merely becomes a man, to be a representative man, or a pattern man, or an ideal man, or a glorified man, one lamb for one offering of propitiation for representative sins or exemplar sins,

for typical restoration, or even for a transcendental illustration of the love of the Father? The Son of God becomes man; He by whom all things consist, and who upholds all things by the word of His power, in whom are hid, not annulled or suspended, all the treasures of the Godhead, wisdom and knowledge, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead, bodily condescends to go through human experience to fit Himself for a certain end; condescends to learn human learning through the alphabet of childhood, the discipline of boyhood, the experience of manhood; to learn to think as man thinks, to speak as men speak, to love as men love, to hear as men hear, to feel as men feel, to come close to all human experience of sin without sinning. Can there be a greater wonder than for the pure God to be so brought close to human uncleanness, the strong God to be so taught human weakness, the loving God to be so tried with human hatreds, and jealousies, and low aims, and the vanity of vanities? And having so learned us, so identified Himself with us, He offers Himself for us in His great love to the Father, who in the same one great love has given Him for us. Offers Himself, still as the all-knowing and all-seeing, pervading the humanity in which He suffers; offers Himself for you and me and all men, seeing there on the

Cross our several souls, our several sins, our several lives and deaths ; identifying Himself as if, in His love, our souls, our sins, our lives and deaths were His own. Did He not then and there bear our sins and carry our sorrows, knowing them as ours, as if they were His own, and in the very plenitude of divine consciousness, experiencing the plenitude of human abjection : My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ? And now, He ever liveth, making intercession for those whose lot He has borne and bears.

It is but in a distant way that we can at all taste of the cup that He drank of ; it is when we realise the sins and sorrows of those whom we love as life itself, and whose sins are a burden to us greater than our own. Can we, with this idea of the atoning work of the Son, and of the power of the Incarnation by which He made it possible—can we, so taught, bear to think of Him as so limited in His humanity, that He could be ignorant, or forgetful, or confused, or inconsistent, deceived or self-deceiving ? Or how, when, and where does the limitation end, and within what terms beyond that of the self-conditioning of constant self-restraint does it affect that region of His work ? If He were incarnate once, is He not incarnate still ; if He were ignorant ever, how has His humanity come to the perfection of

knowledge which those who believe and pray trust in and have trusted ever since St. Stephen saw the heaven opened? If He even could forget, may He forget us still? Nay, if in this life only we have hope in Him we are of all men the most miserable, for His teaching has led us, by the development of all that seems to be best in us, to what is neither more nor less than a delusion or disappointment. Could our loving God, for there must be a loving God, treat us so?

I make no apology for treating this matter thus. I cannot rationalise the atonement; I cannot weigh or analyse the blood of the covenant. I cannot draw the articles of the everlasting covenant of the Incarnation. It is only in a very distant way that I can fashion to myself my idea of what my Lord has done, and is doing, and will do, as I trust, for me. I cannot read the Incarnation as I would a book of Euclid, or a poem of Ovid or Milton. But I think that I know whom I have believed; I would that all men could think of Him as I do; but I cannot bear to anticipate a day when the Church shall cry out to Jesus of Nazareth, "Thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived;" or to the Unknown and Unknowable, "Why didst Thou let Him deceive Himself and us?"

THE REAL PRESENCE

IN a previous address¹ I ventured to sketch out what to me the doctrine of our Church, as interpreting and interpreted by Holy Scripture, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit through the ages of the undivided Church, seems to be, on the subject of the Holy Sacrament. I pointed out the ideas of the sustaining power of the bread of life, the virtue of that sustenance as being the body and blood of the atoning sacrifice, the perpetual offering of the victim by Himself the High Priest, and our share in the priestly presentation as memorial before the Father, and the eucharistic joy in which we unite these characteristics. And I commented on the points in which I thought that the Church of Rome and some Protestant communities also, have by disproportionate and disconnected expansions of one part or another of this great idea, led men into mistakes of doctrine and hazardous superstition in practice.

I began by speaking of the mischievous controversy into which a supposed intention, on the part of some of our brethren, to imitate some of

¹ Not preserved.

the services of the Roman Church, has threatened to involve us. I must now specify some of these matters. I shall be careful to distinguish between what I understand to be the motives of those who are promoting the use of them and the interpretation which their hostile critics put upon them ; in some points I feel sure that both are wrong, but, except where distinct disloyalty comes in, I shall not be careful how to distribute blame.

The first set of uses seems to me to have its original fault in the neglect of that end of communion which is contained in our Lord's first lesson on the Sacrament. He gives us His flesh to eat : the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ ; the cup which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ ? The temptation is to neglect communion ; to watch the celebration, to try to realise the sacrifice and the offering without taking that advantage of it which is the first thing intended. And this is exemplified in the very common practice of non-communicating attendance—a practice so common that it seems a waste of time to quarrel with it, and a practice which has so much to be said for it, as, for instance, the necessity of preparation, the danger of coming unworthily, the uncovenanted blessing of feeling that the Lord is in an especial way present in the ordinance, and that the presence is too great

and wonderful for us in the state of mind and soul in which we find ourselves. I cannot accept such accounts of the matter, true as they are, true as they must be, as sufficient ; it is clear that the Saviour offers His body and blood to us, and we are content not to take it. The ceremony and prayers of the celebration lose their meaning so far as that is concerned. The sacrifice is presented ; the body and blood of the Saviour are present, but the proper apprehension is withheld. Men adore, children are brought to witness the great solemnity, fine music and perhaps picturesque dresses and grouping are there ; the mass in Roman Churches ; and in some of our own churches the service is made as near as can be like it : one priest alone communicates ; the congregation bow their head and worship. And we humbly confess the real presence, as we express it, is there ; but not for the purpose for which it is vouchsafed. I need not enlarge upon this ; I need not remind you that this is the error which makes communion so rare a thing in other churches and societies, the Roman for instance, and I suppose also in the society that is content to follow foreign usages. It is not the intention of the Church of England that it should be so with us ; and I confess that to my mind it is a matter approaching *profanation* to see the ceremony exhibited as a show for the education of children and the perfunctory

witnessing of multitudes who seem to come to hear the music and show little appearance of devotion.

Of the reality of the presence, accepting the plain words of the Saviour, we have no doubt; if the body and blood of the sacrifice of the Cross are to be found in the consecrated elements, there certainly must be a reality of presence; a reality of presence vouchsafed for the special purpose of the communion round which the whole celebration turns. The presence is real, the body and the blood, to be verily and indeed taken and received. But neither the words of the Saviour, nor the logical and necessary inferences from them, imply a speciality of presence for any other purpose than the primary one; nor can a localised presence for a special purpose be set to account as either competing with or superseding the sovereign omnipresence of which He has told us, that He is with us to the end of the world, or where two or three are gathered together in His name, or in that mainstay of all faith, the knowledge of the membership of the body. So read, and without the accretions and disproportionate definitions of antiquity however ancient, and of theology however humbly discursive, read as an inference from the plain words of the Lord, the plain words which are the key to the whole doctrine, and are not expanded or even in this sense applied by the

apostles, our Church accepts a doctrine of Real Presence, the meat and drink of the sacrifice in communion with the work in heaven, and with the Church on earth.

In the second place, I put the custom of reserving the sacrament, and using it in the idea that the real presence is to be worshipped without reference to the idea of sacrifice, or of offering, or with that idea put into an altogether secondary place. I need not tell you that reservation of the consecrated elements, even for the communion of the sick, is against the rule of the Prayer-Book, and that the Articles insist, in a way that cannot be explained out of meaning, that there is no Scripture authority, much less any ordinance of the Saviour, for the lifting up, carrying about, and worshipping them ; and yet, although I would sincerely believe that the essential doctrine of the sacrifice was not absent from the mind of those who invented, and is not absent from the minds of those who imitate, I really cannot see how such offices of adoration as the Benediction, in the Roman Churches, and perhaps others which I am not acquainted with, can be regarded otherwise than as they are regarded by the great majority of those who use them as acts of worship of the consecrated elements, and so verging on the old peril of idolatry.

If I am wrong in thinking that these practices and the imitations of them are caused by a neglect of the primary purpose of institution in the words of our Lord in the sixth chapter of St. John, I am afraid that I may not carry you with me in what I am now going to say; but you must remember that I am not attempting to formulate anything like a rationale of sacramental doctrine, but to put before you a few warnings and misgivings. If, however, one set of difficulties arises from the forgetfulness or disregard of the first of the points that mark our Lord's teaching, another arises from the severance of the doctrine of sacrifice from the institution of the Eucharist. It is very curious that this should ever have occurred, and it is one of the most terrible results of the reaction provoked by the mediæval teaching of the Roman Church that in so many Protestant communities, which recognise the doctrine of our Lord's atonement as the keystone of all belief, the character of this sacrament, as the realisation of the atonement in the particular case, the bringing of the fruits of the atonement to the individual soul, the grand and effective bulwark of the doctrine of the atonement before the eyes and hearts of the people, should be lost sight of. I do not know that, with the majority of Church people at the present day, this consideration is left out of sight

altogether; but the danger is not less dangerous because it is not obvious. Of course, the ordinary effect of this is to be traced in such practices as are found in the careless and perfunctory performance of service, in the unauthorised and sadly irreverent custom of evening communion, and in the prevalence, now happily so rapidly passing away, of the grievous abuse of formal communion, that arises from two centuries of misuse of the institution as a test of secular loyalty and rejection of Roman dogma. No doubt the denial of transubstantiation, in the uninformed, untaught, and limited intelligence of those on whom the tests were forced, did carry with it an ignoring of the doctrine of that giving of the body and blood of the Saviour, that which was, and is, in the sacrifice given for the life of the world. Unhappily, other results follow; with the vanishing of the idea of the food of the sacrifice, disappears, as I have said more than once, the idea of the sustaining power of the bread of life, and the service becomes merely a kindly sentimental reminiscence of a departed friend, instead of the life-giving realisation of the present Saviour.

You may ask, perhaps, what more I have to say about the third point, the anamnesis, the memorial representation, by the celebrating priest, of the sacrifice on which the faithful are fed in the

communion that follows. Well, I would speak very cautiously, because there is great risk in interpreting the thoughts as well as the words of those with whom we differ ; but it does seem to me that there is a risk, very often, perhaps, quite unconscious, and sure to be repelled when it is realised, of losing sight of the action of the High Priest of our profession, in ascribing, or seeming to ascribe, substantial independent action to the acts of the minister, as distinguished from the share that he is taking in the offering. I think that there is a risk, and I am sure that, in common belief of Protestants, there is more than a suspicion, that in the idea of the priestly office there is an idea of distinctive several oblation, separate from the action of the eternal and perfect oblation in the heavens. The idea of remembrance, which is as characteristic in our Lord's words of institution as the word of command, or whatever authority you may incline to regard that word of command as carrying with it for the notion of sacrifice (and I may say that I regard such an interpretation of the word *ποιεῖτε* as altogether unnecessary for any definite proving of the doctrine), the idea of remembrance, reminding, representation, realisation, must be realised, not as an independent, but as a participatory act. The full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction, *is* for the sins of the whole world,

one offering, one sacrifice, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, eternal in the contemplation of the eternal. This is the reality, of which all ancient sacrifice was a type and shadow, and of which the Holy Sacrament is the presentment, memorial, participation, until His coming again. In the blessing of this participation, surely, we have by our membership of Him the right to lay hold of special appropriation of His promises and fulfilling grace, and to offer our prayers with special intention. But there is the risk of separating the special purpose from the reality of the perfect oblation, and so of putting the special celebration and celebrant in the place of the great High Priest.

Against this the Church of England practically guards; but the risk is there, and the misinterpretation of the truth that underlies it is tempting indeed to the self-concentrating devotion of many devout people. I may be wrong altogether, but I am not alone in the belief that the practical specialisation of separate celebrations and the error of assigning an independent priesthood to the celebrant lie in the popular understanding very close together, and that this error, rather than a real misapprehension of the doctrine of the sacrifice, is the real ground for the reasonable suspicions of this side of the religious idea that is called

sacerdotalism, which is so common at the present day. The special and specialised masses, as they are called, which are condemned in the thirty-first Article, are an extreme case of a vagary which I am told is becoming too common to be tolerated. In saying all this, I am well aware that I am liable to the answer that no well-informed Roman Catholic, much less any well-informed advanced churchman, would admit what I have so put ; that is very likely, but the construction which I have offered is the one that is popularly accepted, and that no sufficient care is taken to guard against.

However, there I leave it ; with the conclusion that our own Church offers in doctrine and privilege all that Holy Scripture and the devout teaching of the ancient Church, offer in this means of grace ; yes, and all that men in their anxious desire of personal appropriation can intelligently attempt to grasp at ; but that we draw back from, repudiate, and denounce the abuses that have arisen from the attempts of disproportionate teaching, exaggerated construction, and irrational definition, to give to the Sacrament a character, a form, and a sentiment which the Bible and the ancient Church do not warrant, the insistence of which has been the cause of early disunion, and of an amount of unbelief, neglect, heartburning, uncharitableness, and strife, which only the ingenuity of the great enemy of the

Church could have elicited from the imperfect appreciation of a divine truth. I would speak with the utmost humility, even in condemning the spirit of strife of which I may myself be guilty at this moment ; but I cannot help looking at things so.

SELF-DEDICATION

I

WHATEVER may be the legal or technical name for the engagements which you are going to make at your ordination, morally and religiously that ordination implies, on your part, a dedication, and on the part of the bishop a consecration of your whole life. We speak of vows and undertakings, solemn promises and contracts, and engagements, in these matters, with some looseness of language and perhaps with some indefiniteness of thought, and mingle the considerations connected with them with other matters of a kindred sort, but still belonging to a different sphere of action and a different principle and sanction. The idea of the vow to Almighty God runs, explicitly or implicitly, through all, for it is to His own service, through whatever intermediate steps, that you offer yourselves, and your purpose is consecrated to whomsoever the words of the engagement bind you. You vow yourselves to the sacred ministry; you engage yourselves to the service in the Church

of England in your promise to use the prayer-book, as well as in the answers which you make to the questions which are put to you in the Ordination Service itself; and to the bishop you declare yourself bound in the oath that you will take of canonical obedience as well as in the promise reverently to obey your ordinary. But all three engagements involve the same consideration of definite dedication, and the assumption, or acceptance, of a character which is indelible—a character which cannot be repudiated in after years without a breach of moral continuity in the life on which it has been impressed, or without a withdrawal from an engagement, which you offer in the most solemn way to make, and which He who accepts your offer accepts in the most solemn way in which any such life contract can be offered and accepted.

It is true, as I said last night, that in the present state of the law of the land clergymen are allowed to withdraw from the responsibilities of their profession and position without such consequences as ancient law attached to the act of desertion; there are ways also, as we know to our sorrow, in which, by the act of the judicature of the Church, or by his own voluntary renunciation of his engagement with the Church, the ordained minister may be disqualified, released,

cut off from ministerial work ; and, of course, the simple act of moving from one diocese into another releases the clergyman from his oath of canonical obedience to a particular bishop, even the bishop who has ordained him. But these alterations of relation in no wise alter the distinctive obligation of the original vow to God, or take away the character that the acceptance of the vow has sealed.

Now I am not going to enter into any refinements of definition about these three forms of obligation ; but I wish to say a few words, and I will say them as distinctly as I can, about the act that puts the final and ultimate sanction on them, the dedication or consecration : your offer, God's acceptance, the character impressed in ordination. And I will do this, not dividing the subject, as in a sermon, under those three heads, but regarding the matter as an essential unity ; that is, taking it for granted that the result is the realisation of what you offer and what God accepts and ratifies.

This, then, is your vow : you offer yourself to do His work as a clergyman ; to go where He calls you ; to do as He bids you ; to speak as He enables you and commissions you ; to live as His law directs you ; to work as a fellow-worker with Him ; to suffer as a fellow-sufferer with the Son ; to have no will but His will, no law but His law, no business but

His business, no interest but His interest, no life but the life that you can safely say that you live in Him.

But you may say to me, Is not this the law of all Christian people, and have you not, in rising to the climax of obligation, really only enunciated an ideal that belongs to the life of every child of God and not merely to those who are ordained? That is true, as it is true also that, in the royal priesthood of the peculiar people of God, the dedication of the life is not more complete in the minister than in the layman. But this is a dedication to work that, without being more complete, is more definitely organised, and therefore more cogently and exclusively devoted to its especial purpose of service. The self-offering of the clergyman is not, as a dedication, more complete than that of the ordinary lay Christian; but it is more definite in its purpose, and presses with more directive and restrictive pressure on him who undertakes it. However, leaving that on one side, and looking at it as what it is in itself, not in comparison with other forms of engagement, what does it come to? A self-surrender to do certain things, and to abstain from doing certain other things, for a special end and under special laws. It is perhaps in some respects a surrender of liberty; it is certainly a surrender of absolute freedom of

will in many points in which the ordinary Christian man is left very much to his own freedom of choice; it is a self-surrender to do certain service and, if the liberty to do certain other things beyond and outside that service, is not withdrawn, still that certain service is the first object of life, and that outside liberty is not to be used but for the same ends, and subsidiary to that definite service. I put it very prosaically, hardly unideally; but that is the bare truth of the aspect in which I want it to present itself to you now, that whilst your dedication is to a particular sort of work, you should see that you must in all things within and without that line of definition approve yourselves as ministers of God.

Well then, self-surrender, self-devotion, self-effacement, what does it all mean? We are often told that the very consideration of self should be left out of the thoughts and deliberations of the children of God; that wherever the thought of self comes in it is so far forth an evidence of a division of heart and mind, and a cause, a concomitant, a leaven, an influence of the sin that divides the heart, that ought not to try to serve two masters. I think that, except in very transcendental relations, such a generalisation is misleading, and that, tested by the experience of every man who knows anything of the great

struggles of life, it is unreal. Wherever selfish considerations enter, it may be right to treat them as a dangerous element, as an influence which before the tribunal of conscience tends to the condemnation of the side on which they are marshalled. It may be that wherever they come in they are to be rejected; but they cannot be kept out, they have their substantial, insoluble, inexplicable, inextinguishable weight, and heat, and light, and energy, which cannot, by merely being ignored, be made as if they did not exist; and this being so, it is folly to ignore them or calculate on their extinction. If we offer self-surrender, we have need to know what we surrender, to count the cost; if we speak of self-dedication, we need to know what we are dedicating; if of self-denial, we need to try at all events to measure what is the strength, what are the energies, the desires, the spheres, and the methods of the self-will which we are thinking of denying. In a way we may say that in all these things the consideration of the self is an indispensable element of the reality of the offering of surrender, dedication, or denial. If we did not, if we do not, feel the strength of the self that is offered, what is it that we offer?—too often a mere surrender of the active exertion that lazy self-will is glad to be relieved from making, possibly a slavish or a comatose, scarcely conscious, accept-

ance of the direction of a strong mind or a strong system that saves us the trouble of thinking; it is no real self-surrender for one made in the image of God to place himself in a position or relation of mechanical obedience. But I put this only as an extreme illustration: such an offering so made is one that costs nothing.

The vow of dedication, then, must not be interpreted to mean any such self-abnegation as would even distantly imply the disavowal of, or the attempt to make a composition for, the moral responsibility which every man owes through his conscience to his God: no, not even when it carries with it the fullest measure of abstinence, purity, and obedience which, as servile, does not rise to the dignity of willing ministration. On the other hand, it seems to me that the reality of the dedication involves a careful estimate of the positive as well as of the negative sides of the surrender. I think that a man is bound to consider what he has to offer, even when he wishes to offer all; and here comes in the force of our Lord's parables of the pounds and talents, for it is of His own that we give to Him, *de Tuis Tibi*, and we have nothing to give but what we have received, and that improved and developed by a power which is itself a part of the gift. Of Thine own then we do give Thee, but what and how? For

surely the mere words recall to us the utterance of the unprofitable not of the industrious servant : "Lo, there Thou hast that is Thine ; for I knew that Thou wast an austere man." There are two ways of saying this *de Tuis Tibi*.

Well, surely the meaning is that we offer to this service our whole endowments, powers, faculties, gifts, whatever we call them, not as things of no account, but to be improved, developed, fitted, adapted for the end to which they shall be devoted. You have a gift of, we will say, eloquence, or mental acumen, or power of assimilating learning, or of persistent research, or of kindly enthusiasm in others, or of seeing your way through difficult questions of moral or mental interest. Offering yourselves, you offer and consciously offer your service for these ends as well as for general ordinary work. You are conscious of your gift, and you know it to be your duty to develop your gift. And it may be that the circumstances of your lot place you in a position in which there is no room at all for your gift to be made as you might think useful—no scope for your eloquence, no material for your investigation, no critical subject-matter for your acute penetration ; in an English country place, we will say, where people and occasions and opportunities are commonplace, and where work is so pressing and

so continuous that you cannot for very stress of occupation find time to cultivate the good gift that, when you offered yourself, seemed to be the best thing that you had to offer.

I am not taking a very extreme case ; but it is perhaps not so common a case now as it used to be when the urgency of the work and the keenness of competitions were not so conspicuous as they are now, when every bishop and patron regards it as a primary duty to try to get the right man, as the saying goes, into the right place. Still it is a case that may occur to any of you ; you may all your lives be open to the temptation to think that you could have used your gift very much better in some other place than that in which you are fixed. Or it may be that you find yourself in a place in which you fancy that your gifts are exactly the thing that is wanted ; that you are the right man in the right place, and you can cultivate your graces and be sure that you are doing your Lord's work at the same time ; and in time comes the call to go to another service, and you hold back because, as it seems to you, you are more needed here than there ; that the Lord has need of you. Now, in both those cases it seems to me that the very essence of the trial of self-surrender comes. Of course I make allowance for self-deception : in the former case you may

deceive yourselves as to what you could do if your sphere of work was altered; in the latter case you may be deceiving yourselves both as to the value of your self-cultivation and as to the efficiency of the work which you flatter yourself that you are doing for God and your people. I lay down no casuistic rules. But if you do not still the unquiet restlessness in the one case, if you reject the call to the less congenial work in the other, you are like Ananias and Sapphira keeping back a part of the price when you had thought that you were giving all. You are choosing the determination of your own lot. Rest and wait, in time He will show you how your work has been made a part of the work of Him who pleased not Himself, but emptied Himself of all His glory to accept the lot of His devotion; go where He calls you, in such obedience He, at all events, is saving you from the danger of your will-worship, and interpreting your view of surrender as in good faith you ought to have made it.

But what is the object of the surrender? Surely it is the work of the Lord. The Saviour Himself set, as the prize of His sacrifice, the joy of saving those for whom He died; the glorification of the atonement was not in the ineffable act of the sacrifice, but in the prevailing love that

ordained it and worked out the issues of life by it. So it shall be with us, also workers together with Him; so it is in all the workers: the old things are passed away, but it is into the newness of energetic life; they who are dead to sin are not buried in their annihilation, but rise again unto righteousness. Self is not abolished or absorbed in altruism, but quickened, sanctified, as redeemed for a perfect identification with the will of God. It is not the mortification but the quickened energy that is the crown of the surrender, the perfection of the vow. The very self that before the surrender is a snare, after the surrender is a matter as precious as any other portion of that which is not our own, but bought with a price. I put these thoughts before you, unconnected, perhaps, and ill-digested as you may think them, partly as expressing some items of a long experience, partly as called out by the occasional incidents of diocesan administration. Let them have with you what weight they may. Behold the servant of the Lord, as "Behold the handmaid;" be it unto me even as Thou wilt. All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee. There is no room for self-assertion, even in the act of self-surrender; what have we that we have not received?—no room for self-esteem, self-conceit, self-will; it is not in man

that walketh to direct his step. Yet we have to work as knowing the work to be our own, and to fight as if the winning of the victory depended on our hands, and to love our people as if they were none others than our own, and to guard the truth as if it were our own peculiar deposit. We have to realise our share in our Lord's burden by bearing theirs whom He commits to us; to give our whole gifts to the work as if it were all our own and we had none other. And this high idea we have to make practical in very humble and prosaic and unspiritual, as men speak of spiritual, surroundings, conscious that our treasure is in an earthen vessel of no refined clay, and a potsherd striving with the potsherds of the earth; yet sure that the hand of our Lord is upon us, having accepted us, His right hand upholding us, and magnifying even our work and office by His loving correction. Wist ye not that like Him you must be about your Father's business? Cast away the things that are behind, and stretch forward unto the things that are before. Let Thy merciful kindness, O God, be upon us; stablish Thou the thing that Thou art working in us; we do put our trust in Thee. O stablish Thou the handiwork which Thou mayest do even through us, for we are Thine. We are Thine, O save us.

II

Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.—I COR. iv. 2.

THAT a man be found faithful ; a steward who may be trusted ; by whom men may hold fast because they know that he holds fast ; in whom they have faith because they know that he is faithful to his commission, his instructions, and a pure conscience ; true-hearted in the fullest sense, realising his position, abiding constantly by his convictions, courageous both to do and to suffer ; real, loving, and brave.

Such faithfulness, beloved, is the character which God looks for in your service of the ministry to which you are offering yourselves this morning ; not that you are to be judged of man's judgment, but that those who are to be expected to believe because of your word should be able to discern in you the evidence that you yourselves believe, heartily, constantly, courageously, without blinking facts or difficulties, without shrinking from responsibilities, without flinching from dangers. Men have a right to look for faithfulness in those who offer to teach them the law of Jesus ; if they find it not, woe unto him by whom the offence cometh. It is no easy thing. There is no reason why we should expect

that it should be. How dare we offer to God that which shall cost no sacrifice, involve no struggle. It is not an instantaneous effort of impulse, not one short sharp act of self-devotion ; we may sometimes incline to wish that it was, that the struggles and the efforts and the endurances of life could in this, as in other regions of responsibility that we vainly try to compound for, be summarised in one act of self-effacement. It is a sustained effort to be faithful. And it is a sustained effort to be faithful within a definite area of work and a definite sphere of responsibility. It is as stewards, not as free-lances ; as ministers, servants of God for a definite service, servants of the people of God for a defined purpose, and for a defined section of the flock. And this character of sustained effort and definite duty is of the very essence of faithful stewardship. Neither feature is complete without the other ; neither is possible without the grace of the Holy Ghost who will to-day give Himself to you in abundant force and measure, if your heart's desire is towards the work, and you do not quench the purpose which he has already kindled in you.

Let us think for the few minutes that we have now [before we begin the service] a few serious thoughts about two characteristics of the faithful steward : the grace, not the faithfulness itself, that we must take for granted, the sincerity of

purpose, and the complete and unlimited trust in the truth and helpfulness of Him who has called us. That I need not lay down as a foundation truth : "that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him ;" that Jesus is true, that He died for us, that He has called us, made us His own, and put His Spirit within us. He is full of grace and truth, full of truth and grace : truth that can be appreciated and held fast; grace that is bountiful and sufficient; and of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. He is true and helpful ; we are holding fast by His truth, and trusting in the strength of His help.

Let these two characteristics of the stewardship come before us in the light of the great example of the Master whose commission and strength to discharge it you are going to ask and to receive.

The steward of the Lord has his definite field of work. You, beloved, will find your faithfulness first limited in its area of field. You are to be sent not to preach the Gospel to every creature, but to preach the Gospel and minister the mysteries to a very limited number of creatures ; and your faithfulness will be tested by your work done among and for your own parishioners, or your own pupils, it may be. Your faithfulness translated into the language of practice means your thorough devotion to them for your Lord's sake and for

their own ; for as your Lord cares for them for their own sakes, so if your heart is right with His heart you will care for them for their own sakes ; not merely contenting yourselves with doing duty involved in the most superficial aspect of the charge committed to you, as if you could say to God, "Lo Thou hast what is Thine;" but tending the flock with a distinct personal and individual care. If, as I shall warn you in the Ordination Service, you are to regard your own parish as being for you the presentment of the spouse of Christ, you must see that no less is expected of you. I do not advise you to neglect the use of mechanical means and agencies, or to throw over the advantage that rules and methods of work may furnish you ; nay, use them to the fullest, but do not in the completeness of administrative system or in the discharge of the most useful rules, content yourselves with the idea that you have done your duty.

Personal acquaintance, personal sympathy, personal identification, intimate visitation, thorough consideration of difficulties, dangers, and distresses ; constant prayer and intercession for individual souls—all these are parts of the faithfulness of the good steward as they are of the faithfulness of the Good Shepherd. And the most faithful preaching of sermons, the most zealous conduct of missions,

the most splendid manifestation of administrative capacity, without this individuality of faithfulness to the definite flock, will be rather a snare of will-worship than a discharge of the duty that cannot be discharged but by love. Not but that these should be done, only let not the other be left undone. You will not know your people and your people will not love you, only through district visitors; you will not know your children and they will not love you, only through Sunday-school teachers; they will not believe in you because they read in the newspapers your sermons and speeches delivered in other places. However commonplace may be the majority, however repulsive the few, however manifold the hostilities, however scanty the handful of fellow-workers, the flock that Jesus sends you to was in His eye worth dying for, and it must be in yours worthy of the devotion of the life, or of that portion of the life which, under His direction for the time, you are to give it. The true steward is at home in his stewardship; it is to him not exclusive of the great body of the Church, but that medium by which in this aspect he asserts his hold on the great body of the Church—his touch on the mystical body of the Lord translated into the flesh and blood of human fellowship.

Next, the steward of the Lord has definite

functions and instructions : he is not to seek his own, he is not at liberty to manage his Lord's business as he thinks best; with a very limited discretion, he must be faithful to the letter as well as to the spirit of the commission by which his Lord empowers him to act. Just as his faithfulness binds him first and closest to his area of work, so it binds him first and closest to the articles of his service. The steward of the mysteries, in his character of an English clergyman, has to look first and foremost, and last and through all, to the conditions of his ordination, the definitions of the doctrine which he is to preach, the rules of the ceremonies which he is to perform, the direct and immediate character of the relations in which he stands both to his Lord and to his people. We have no need, and we have certainly no right, to complain of the narrowness of restriction, though we are bound to recognise its cogency. The work of the Christian minister is to build up in Christ; the result may be, and ought to be, the edification of the people in all things, the development of their faculties, the brightening of their lives, the stimulating of their power of appreciating truth, goodness, and beauty in every presentment of the same; but those are the results, not the first or the final objects of the ministerial work. You have to teach your people that they are re-

deemed and regenerate children of the Highest ; when they realise that, they will desire to approve themselves so in all things, but that must come first. You will teach them that their bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and that their gifts, bodily and mental, are talents which God has given them to improve and devote to His glory ; and, knowing that, they will come to desire the things which come next to godliness ; but the teaching of the spiritual life must come first. It is a good thing, it is a necessary thing for a clergyman to be forward in promoting all schemes of philanthropy, culture, social reform, and even innocent amusement ; but these are the outcome of his love of God and his people, they are not the substantive part of his work, and he is not a faithful steward, far from it, who would substitute them, important as they are, for the direct discharge of the commission to preach repentance and the forgiveness of sins and the grace of God in the means given by the Redeemer through faith in His blood.

And as with the work so with the doctrine ; and my warning is not unnecessary in either direction : we hear much too much about free handling of the word of God. The faithful steward of the mysteries will be very careful about free handling his Master's title-deeds of inheritance and the

charters that comprise the rights and obligations of his Master's people. And his faithfulness is not contented with taking the letter of his obligation and making it the maximum of restriction, so that he shall conceive himself at liberty to preach or to act just as he pleases, when and where there is no formal prohibition in the Prayer-Book and Thirty-nine Articles; to pick out of other systems of doctrine and practice anything that he likes, provided there be no absolute prohibition in the law of our own Church. He is faithful to the Spirit, and holding closely the letter will look for guidance as to the Spirit, in the history of the Church, the theology of the schools, and the experience of the saints. Woe be to the young clergyman, or the old clergyman either, who sets himself to work to discover new doctrines in the word of God; new applications he can always find, new illustrations of the truth revealed, but as for the faith once delivered, we can only fall back on the words of St. Paul: "Though we or an angel from heaven preach unto you any other doctrine than that which ye have received, let him be anathema." Of course the searching out and realising the meaning of that which we have received is itself taken for granted, after the aphorism of the same apostle: "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good,"—to the law and to the

testimony. But I pass on. These thoughts are to be to you suggestions ; they cannot be a rationale or exposition of what you have to learn by study, experience, success, and disappointment, for your own selves. Only remember the first step of faithfulness in this matter is the renunciation of self-will in belief and practice, the effacement of self so far as is compatible with reality and responsibility.

And so we come back to our starting-point, the third essential of faithfulness, the sustaining of the effort ; who is sufficient for the task that you are undertaking ? You may have the tongue of men and angels ; you may have hearts susceptible of the most intense devotion ; you may entirely efface self-will in the realising of belief and in the performance of duty ; and yet you may flag, you will flag ; you may, you must, grow weary ; you may, you must, long for change ; you may, you must, tremble for the stability of your work, and find yourselves stunned even to paralysis by the sense of failure. How can you, how will you, hold on under the pressure of such influences ? Your sufficiency is of God ; but is the word enough to keep you up, when you feel that you may yourself be responsible for the failure of that sufficiency ; is the word enough when you feel that the work of the faithful steward ought to be more effectual, and that the

want of effect may be traced to the flaws in your faithfulness ; is it well to be content with saying, I have done what I could, I have tried to earn this testimony that I have pleased God, when you know that it is not for you but for Him to say whether you have done what you could, and to say whether He sees the effort that you are perhaps too ready to assume that you have made ? Your own hearts must supply the answer. Young as you are, you are as wise in your appeal to the faithfulness of the Lord as the most experienced of all the saints, if you have learned the first lesson of Christ, to throw yourselves unrestrainedly and unreservedly, earnestly and patiently, on the treasures of strength that are open at the voice of prayer. Seek ye the Lord where He may be found ; call upon Him when and where He is near ; ask and ye shall have ; seek and ye shall find. But ask as those who desire to have ; seek as those who desire to find ; work as men who love your work ; trust as men who ask to be trusted ; preach as men who believe their message, and your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. But do not, on the strength of mere assertion of dignity, privilege, commission, or office, expect men to receive you as ministers of Christ, stewards of the mysteries of God. It is required in stewards, surely, reasonably, in the sight of God and of the

world, of men and angels, and of the steward's own conscience also, that a man be found faithful.

III

LET us this afternoon give our five minutes to the thought of at least one side of the work to which you are going to dedicate yourselves on Sunday. One side, I say, for the work has many aspects and many departments on which nothing but experience under the guidance of the Holy Ghost can give much light. But we can at this stage face one, the first and chiefest of all. You are going to enter on a share of the work of Jesus, a fulfilment of a part of His great purpose, a bringing to bear of His great mission of atonement and forgiveness on the hearts and lives of individual men, a share in the great struggle between good and evil which He is overruling to His own glory and to your share of His victory. The work is one which demands all your energies and all your heart, the devotion of all your powers, the training of all your powers to their best use, the devotion of all your time, of all your thoughts, of all your desires, of all your sympathies. Its nature is of the same character as His work: a life given for the brethren; a life laid down for the flock; the bearing of their burdens so as to fulfil the law of Christ; a sorrowing for their sins far more than

they will ever sorrow for them ; a turning away of their temptations, temptations that they will run after ; a teaching of their minds, souls, and spirits to turn to, and look up to, and rise up to Him. He will give you a right to say of yourselves as He said of Himself, taking to Himself the word of the prophecy : the Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek, He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted and proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and to comfort all that mourn.

It is, however, in relation to your own dedication that I wish to force thought upon you now. The act that you are going to do in ordination is not the mere taking up of a profession which involves certain duties and responsibilities, which, when they are discharged, you can regard as done with, taking the rest of your time and thoughts for yourself. The duties and responsibilities of a parish priest never cease ; the office demands a sole devotion. I do not say that the whole of your time will necessarily be occupied with directly mechanical pastoral work ; but the pastoral work must have the command of it all. You must never let any engagement come into competition with it ; you must never leave it unprovided for on the chance of

your presence not being required; you can never go to rest with the thought that you have done all that is required of you—not even when you have done all you can, or all that you can see that any man could do. It must have the supreme command of your time; and if your gifts and opportunities open to you other ways besides purely pastoral ministration, the care of the flock of Christ, which He commits to you, must be the centre-point round which all your work must circle. If you have time for writing, your ministerial work has the supreme claim on your writing; it must be writing that shall be for the defence and edification of the flock. If you have a gift of teaching, it must be devoted to the teaching of the things that belong to the Gospel of Christ, to the defence and edification of the flock. There is no gift that cannot be so used, although there are some, of course, which are less directly available to strict pastoral duty; there is no gift that cannot be used so as to help on the work which, as work of Christ, must be all in all to you. I am speaking mainly of the work of the parish priest, for although there are other regions of ministerial life, in which the discharge of the duties of the office is less distinctly pastoral, or is exercised for the whole Church rather than for an individualised portion of the flock, it is to pastoral and parochial

work that you are now proposing to devote yourselves, so that I need only say with regard to others that, whatever the line of their ministerial work may take, teaching or writing, their teaching and writing, or whatever else, must be ultimately directed to one and the same end.

Your work is thus a work exhaustive of all your time, powers, energies, and opportunities; it requires an abnegation, an evacuation of self as complete as that which I spoke of yesterday as involved in the idea of the authority that is delegated to you; it is your Lord's work, and to be His work at all, it must be all His. Think of that; if He is to set His mark upon it, to call it His, it must be all His. There is no exception, no limitation to this rule. It affects us in meat and drink, in relaxation and amusement, as well as in earnest labour and concentrated energy of thoughtful purpose. It pervades all, and gives colour to all the life. The clergyman is as always a clergyman as a gentleman ought always to be a gentleman; that is a very external way of putting it, but it is the mere translation into prose of the high poetry of the true life of God's servants. As they are men, with the desires and appetites and needs of men, who have to think of the meat that perisheth and of the wants of to-day and to-morrow, like any others, their work

need not be stated in extravagant terms, as if their ordinary life were to be a counsel of perfection. But in all their needs, and in all their pleasures, and in all possible diversities of their labours, the work of their life is the same and one; not to be set aside for any other, not to be forgotten, not to be contented with, not to be wearied of, not to be forsaken, not to be despaired of: "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me." The cross that is once taken up can never be laid down.

TWO ADDRESSES ON THINGS NATURAL AND THINGS SPIRITUAL

I

The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name. He shall teach you all things.—ST. JOHN xiv. 26.

At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me and I in you:—ST. JOHN xiv. 20.

Is it too much to say that the life of a Christian minister, his work, his experience, his introspection, and his outlook, does in a way concentrate and accentuate all the problems of the spiritual life; its paradoxes and its perplexities, its realisation of individual identity and corporate unity, its consciousnesses, and its ignorances; the strength and weakness of its faiths and energies of working, its reconciliations of the things that are seen and the things that are not seen, its complex apprehension of either in the other, of things temporal and things spiritual, time and eternity? We might well expect it to be so; a lesson, however, hard to learn, and always growing in the experience of our own and other

men's needs, strengths, and weaknesses. We might well expect it to be so, if we believe that He who made our life His own, and sends us out, as the Father sent Him, to undertake a share in the fulfilment of His plan of the world's salvation, does give us of His Spirit to quicken us in all that He would have us attempt to do, helping us to become all things to all men, qualifying us to enter into the lot and experience of all to whom He sends us.

I would put one of the thoughts that this idea suggests very simply to you and the congregation to-day. The work that we all of us, clergymen and laymen, have to do for God is to be done in relation to the world in which we live, and yet with as distinct relation to the world which is to be revealed; we have but one life: temporal and eternal, natural and spiritual, are not differences that break up identity. The steps of conscious development, change, and reaction, the very crucifixion of the old man, the very passage from death to life, through death to life, does not break a continuity of the old and the new; old things pass away, all things become new, but they are permanent in consciousness, becoming, changing, growing, but intrinsically identical. The life that we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God; it is

a new life we trust, but it is also the old—the fashion changing, but the substantial self enduring; yes, until He makes all things new, and that which has been temporal, eternal. But I am repeating myself, I see.

Our point is, how are we to do our work in the world with our eyes set on that which is out of the world; how are we to manage the things temporal, looking to the things eternal; how is the faith that is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, to grasp the work that lies before us, and is to be apprehended primarily by the outward senses, the experience of every-day life, the doing of the very simplest, humblest, most servile items of manual duty? How are we to translate the things temporal into the things eternal, and to realise the things eternal through the things temporal—the atmosphere, the distances, the comparative scale, the analogies, the proportions, the relations, the substantive identities of either with those of the other?

First, we need to remember that the things spiritual and eternal are not a long way off from us in local distance or in an incalculably remote future. The presence of the Lord Almighty, the Father, sets them all close to us. They are about us and within us; the revelation of them in

all their fulness and brightness, and in all their unravelled relations with the life of men, wherein the things hoped for will have become tangible and the things not seen visible, in ways on which the highest and clearest faith has no conscious hold as yet ; the revelation of all that is around us of God's glory and purpose and great design may be made a matter of prayer and of earnest, humblest aspiration in hope for the manifestation of the sons of God ; but, for all that, *now* the word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thine heart. He is about our path and about our bed ; all our ways are before Him who is the Lord of the spiritual and the eternal ; and as we realise that, we realise something, at all events, of the law of our spiritual life : Do not I fill heaven and earth ? saith the Lord. In Him we live and move and have our being. There is a faith to which a door is opened in heaven, and the hosts of God are in a manner revealed, as the horses and chariots of fire round Elisha's house in Dothan were to the young man whose eyes the Lord opened in answer to the prophet's prayer. The secret of God is in our tabernacle, and we can, if we try, bear what we have to bear and do what we have to do, as seeing Him who is invisible ; His reward with Him and His work before Him. We can—yes, we can find in all the beautiful phases of the life natural,

sacraments of His love, outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace. If the recognition of this is what theologians call the deepening of the spiritual life, so be it ; I rather call it the flowering and fruition of the spiritual consciousness, the growing power to appreciate the all-embracing, all-quickenings, all-penetrating presence of Him who made us in His image, and has regenerated us by His Spirit, and will conform us to the image of His Son. It is too great and wonderful for us ; yes, but the light and the life *are all* around us and in us ; now are ye the sons of God, when the great day comes we shall see with the natural as with the spiritual sight the very absolute necessity of a personal God—the Father who made me and all the world, in the risen body, for the redemption of which we pray, as the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together, waiting for the manifestation. It is too great and wonderful for us, *but there it is*.

Then next we need to remember that we are members of the body of the Lord Christ, of His flesh and of His bones. He has made us so ; and He learned by the experience of His life as a man—a knowledge spiritual and eternal—the manner and lot of all whom He would save, and He would save all. As His members, and as I said at first, in some special ways as His ministers, we can try

to realise our work as His work, our people as His people, our neighbours as those on whom we are to bring to bear His law and love and example ; as our Lord Jesus Christ the eternal God enters into the lot of us all — not watching us as afar off, or, calmly close to us, regarding us as curious experiments, but with a special identification with us, which we realise the more intrinsically and entirely as we realise our identification with those whom He sends us to love and serve. And in this we are all, clerk and lay, priests to one another in so far as we can reproduce the character and work of Him, who lived, and died, and rose again, and lives eternally for us, Christ *in us*, the hope of glory. In His strength we bear our burdens, sorrow for our sins, fight our fight, win our victories ; in this identification with Him we bear one another's burdens, sorrow for one another's sins, fight one another's battles, win one another's victories. And the whole of life may be so transfigured ; again there is a door opened in heaven, such as that by which St. Stephen saw the Son standing at the right hand of God, our ever-present Lord, and brother, Saviour, High Priest, He in us and we in Him, the historic verity of the Christ of the Gospel who has redeemed me and all the world, standing at the right hand of our ever-present Lord and Father, whom we feel and know,

feeling and knowing Him as Jesus ; and seeing Him, see the Father. In heart and mind we may realise what it is to ascend whither He ascended and there continually dwell ; the heavens that are round about us ; the heaven of the great triumph. He does not leave us comfortless ; we have the Holy Ghost to comfort us and exalt us to the same place whither He is gone before, to dwell continually, even though, to our outward eyes, our life goes on in the streets and lanes of the city, or in the bank or law court, or in the workhouse or the hospital, or in the splendid centres of temptation ; hand and glove with the cares of this life, cheek by jowl with presumptuous sin.

Was His life at all like ours ? Shall not our revelation be the entering into a glory that we are now only learning to desire ? Lord, I believe ; help Thou mine unbelief. And so once more, as it is good for us that He should go away that the Comforter might come, can we not realise what the Comforter is doing in us and for us, the life of our life, the strength of our heart, the power within us ; the presence of the Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. We need no philosophic analysis of the example of our Lord ; he who realises belief in the Holy Ghost knows the experience of the

gifts that rest upon Him, the gifts of confirmation and of ordination ; for it is the self-same Spirit and the self-same gifts, however and wherever we are appointed to serve—the conscious energy of holy desire, good counsel, and just works in the realised presence of the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me and all the elect people of God ; the spirit of wisdom that shows us the face of the Lord ; and the spirit of understanding that interprets the tenor of the great example, in our own individual circumstances, that we may be somewhat, at all events, in some blessed way, something of what He would have been in those circumstances, and wills that we should try to be ; and the spirit of counsel helping us to do that which His wisdom and understanding have taught us ; and the spirit of ghostly strength to arm us and quicken us for our battle and our work, our victory in Him who giveth it us, and our reward in the diligent seeking ; and the spirit of knowledge, that shall teach experience and temperance and patience ; and the spirit of true godliness in the exercise of the best and most excellent way of charity ; and that spirit of the holy fear of the Lord in which we realise the enveloping and strengthening presence of the Invisible Father, and the Son the Saviour, and the same Holy Ghost by whom the gifts come.

You, beloved, may realise this in the service which we are beginning now. Great, again, and surpassingly wonderful, yet not more than His promise, a present earnest of a greater fulfilment. Has He not called us to a share of the work? The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; upon you whom He will anoint, upon you whom He has anointed, to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. Yet He knows whereof we are made, He remembereth that we are but dust; He gives His Holy Spirit as He gives His commission to His ministers, the weightiness and dignity of a charge to do some part of His work.

Trinity Sunday is a good day for ordination. All the lessons of Trinity Sunday have their bearing on the ordination work. I have not pitched the note of joy and faith too high, or the note of humility and humiliation too low; as the heaven is higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, He says; and yet He, the way and the truth and the life, will make our ways like His ways by the Spirit whom He gives us. Well, this is the spiritual life. God help us.

And what is the conclusion of the whole matter?

Surely none other than the whole counsel of God, work and prayer. Work alone can by the Spirit translate the example of Jesus into our lives, and work by the Spirit will. Who can evaluate the power and force and manifold operation of the prayer through the Lord the Son, in which the same Spirit helps our infirmities? In both He leads us on to know more of His ways and to grow in the love of what we know. May He reveal presently to you what your line of work shall be, and the mystery of prayer in efficacy for yourselves and those whom He shall give you to care for; the strong hold that you have on Him who worketh in you, and the unfailing instrument by which you reach Him and He makes real to your consciousness His own reaching out to you. In prayer God reveals Himself in ways of which we may have ever-growing experience: to the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit; Holy blessed and glorious Trinity. And this much comes to all, a chosen people, a royal priesthood; to you in well-defined ways, that shall shine more and more to the perfect day, but in which even now and here you may prove the light in you and about you, walking as children of light. The Lord be with you.

II

THERE are some occasions in our life and work in which it is wise to try to appreciate to the best of our powers the distinction or the distance between the things natural and the things spiritual. There are many in which it is safe and wise to minimise the distinction ; there are many in which we find a great and comforting lesson in the attempt to discriminate between them. We best realise the objective identity by trying to measure the subjective apprehensible difference. It is true that in most matters it is best to regard the one aspect as the complement of the other, the realities being the same, and the angle of vision alone differing. Thus we may well look on our life here below as an integral portion of our life eternal ; our daily work as a portion of the work by which God uses us to forward His own gracious purposes for the world and the Church ; the scenes of our ordinary going out and coming in, our ordinary walk, as a real pathway to heaven, a phase of the pilgrimage to the continuing city ; our neighbours, family, friends, wife and children, as the tangible apprehensible medium in which we realise our hold on that body of the Church which is of His

flesh and His bones. It is well that we do realise matters so ; and, indeed, in such realising there is a working of the spiritual force, a consciousness of the enveloping and penetrating presence of the Deity, the force of which I am going to speak, that is essential, although it must not be restricted to this contemplation, or, as you may be disposed to call it, realisation of the truth of life. For this realisation, great and effective as it is, is not all ; not all in itself, much less all in its provision of comfort, and strength, guardianship, hopefulness, and assurance of faith.

Look at the words which I have read as the text, just for one moment with their context, then in their grander, wider application. They are written of Moses, and the source of his enduring power in the resistance of temptation and overcoming of trial and danger : he is a great example of the power which so realises the unseen as to act effectually upon a certainty of which it has no tangible proof ; the faith to which the things unseen are as clearly and definitely and assuredly a basis of action, as even the consciousness of his own existence, the consciousness of the energies by which he attempts to prove that existence to himself, and, as in common language we should say, as the evidence of the senses. And I should

infer from the method of the writer of the chapter that this energy of faith in the cases of Moses, this seeing of Him who is invisible, must be regarded as anterior to the sign vouchsafed in the mystery of the burning bush, much more to the vision of God which was granted him on Mount Sinai. However, let that pass ; and let us see how to us the words have their effective meaning.

I do not wish to intrude anything fanciful in the way of illustration ; look simply at the great ascription in the seventeenth verse of the first chapter of the first epistle to Timothy, and see the position there given to this characteristic of Deity : "Now unto the King eternal, incorruptible, invisible, the only wise, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen." The one attribute that speaks directly to us is the third, "invisible, eternal, incorruptible, all-wise, solitary in dignity and essence." These things are not in reach of our cognisance : we could not test or prove them ; but the existence of such a personality, nevertheless, is not beyond the outreaching of our idea. We might see Him, and we might at all events bring our consciousness to contact with Him ; we have heard of Him with the hearing of the ear, could not our eye see Him ? we know that He is about our path and about our bed, and spieth out all our

ways, could we not test that? we know His promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world"—we can prove that; we know that St. Stephen, in the critical moment of his testimony, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into Heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God; and likewise we know that He has told us, in another aspect it may be of His counsels, that even if we desire to see one of His days, the days of the Son of Man, we shall not see it; and we accept, too, the application of the apostle's words, that we look not at the things that are seen but at the things that are not seen, for the things that are seen are temporal, the things that are not seen are eternal: meaning, one concludes, that we must be content that the eternal things, with which the things temporal are not to be suffered to come into competition, are things which are not seen; but yet to the loving faith of the elect, as certain as if with open face we beheld as in a glass the glory of the Lord, "as seeing Him who is invisible," as conscious of a presence, of a promise of faithfulness, of an abiding guardianship, of a communion realised in prayer, of a protection exerted in thousands of ways of which we take no count, of a watchfulness, not indeed extreme to

mark what is done amiss, but that cannot help judging and sorrowing over it—a watchfulness ever averting the evil, and making openings for the good ; conscious of an omnipresent agent whom, not seeing, we can love ; in whom, although we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with a joy that may be, as it is unspeakable, also to us full of glory. For the invisible omnipresence is the presence of the Lord Jesus, the express image of the person of the Father. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. O God, how long are we to wait !

Well, it is one aspect of faith, a primary element—a simple lesson ; not all, certainly not all. Let it be, however, to us to-night a primary element, a simple lesson ; certainly not all, but enough for one attempt to grasp ; an idea which, covering all the other contemplations of faith, may take the predominant position in a consideration of your consciousness of the things spiritual ; predominant not as excluding any, but as ruling all ; the reality of the surrounding and indwelling of the Lord, “as seeing Him who is invisible.” Are you not trying to realise something of that in these days of waiting for your commission and gift ? The sustaining force of the consciousness of the reality ! Please do not think that I am trying to be a mystic, or that in looking forward to

the work of St. Thomas's Day I am putting what is called a subjective view of religious life and duty to the derogation of distinct, objective, doctrinal, and experimental aspects of the one faith. I have no wish—God forbid that I should have—to trifle with any of you. But I do see, as I trust you see, yet as I cannot be quite sure that you do without the need of forcible reminding, the greatness of the occasion and the greatness of the consideration.

It is true there is no man in the world, nor any occasion of life, to which or to whom the thought is without bearing. In its bare self, I imagine, it covers all the history of all religions from the first fetich to the last avatar of the pantheist. But what is it to be to you who are going out to work with a duty, and in a character, and looking to a lot, every single thought and act of which is to be directed to the maintenance of a faith which is the realising of it? As ministers, watchmen, stewards; as parish priests, schoolmasters, visitors of sick and sound; as members of social circles; as students of life, history, and manners; as living and dying men who look to rise and give account—do you, with such powers as your nature, God's grace, your training, your aspirations, your experience have furnished you with—do you look for, are you looking for, are you realising the presence,

as seeing Him who is invisible, my Lord and my God ?

It is surely a great mercy that in the Holy Scripture the thought comes to us generally so full of help and strengthening influence. For one case in which the terrors of the invisible presence are put before us to shame, and confusion, and wonder, and perishing, there are countless passages of encouragement and sustaining ; and there is no case of failure or desertion, nor any threat of it ; if we deny Him even, He will not deny Himself. It is true that the direct lessons of the consciousness so impressed *are* simple lessons—purification, loyalty, courage, endurance, the love that is the very fruit of faith ; but the simplicity of the lesson, here as everywhere, is no warranty for its cogency. You must think now what you are doing with the word in your ears. In all the work of your life, from your ordination forward until you see Him face to face, you are to maintain the consciousness that you are the ministers of an unseen presence—the unseen presence of the Lord Jesus ; that you are living in the midst of it, speaking in the conviction of it, yes, living and moving, thinking, speaking, and acting in and through it ; trying to live, and move, and think, speak, and act, as if it were visible ; no word that you should be

ashamed to speak in the presence ; no thought that you should be ashamed to think in the presence ; no temper that you should be ashamed to yield to ; so much on the one side, trying to be pure as those who bear the vessels of the Lord. And how much more on the other side ; never alone, never helpless, never out of reach of the hand of Almighty grace and power ; never at a loss for the consolation of the companionship of One who knows all that is within you and without you, and is trying to keep your heart right with His. He is on my right hand, therefore I shall not fall ; if I fall, I shall arise. I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me ; I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me ; Thy rod and staff can comfort me ; I can hear Thy voice, of a surety Thou hearest mine, and my prayer is continually with Thee ; still I know Thou bearest my griefs and carriest my sorrows.

Perhaps it is in this last point that the commonest experience of mankind realises the truth. We can and do in trouble throw ourselves on the everlasting arms, and we are not left alone, as if He would grudge in those moments the help and sympathy that at other times we scarcely seem to care for ; but it might be the same always, and it is so to those who make trial of that faithfulness.

And here we come round to that aspect of life which I set on one side when I began to speak to you. The presence of the invisible is not to be thought of merely in relation to the things spiritual, as we speak ; there is no region, no aspect of life in which the realisation of that presence is not a power sustaining, strengthening—a ready resource for all help, counsel, and perseverance. I need not repeat it. If there are supposed to be any ways and lines of life from which God can be supposed to be remote as well as invisible, there are none indeed but those which are matters of offence : He hideth away His face and he will never see it. There can be no such supposition in regard to ours. He with whom, in such special devotion of service, we have to do, and to whom all things are dear and open, though we see Him not, sets us our especial work under such conditions. We, above all men, have least excuse for losing our hold on this truth, the most loss and shame when it ceases to be a force and strength to us. May He who is specially, if we may dare to speak so, who is specially making His presence real to us, in these contemplations of our calling, making us conscious of a special purpose and efficacy of His presence in the ordination act, keep us in this perseverance and assurance of faith.

Do we say we dare not hope for it ? we cannot

presume to say that we can do more than desire that it may be so vouchsafed to us to have Him always before us : it demands a strain for which we are altogether incompetent. We are not endowed with the unwearied, unceasing, undivided gift of contemplation, as we may imagine angels to be ; we are weak of purpose, and very soon weary : prayer, *even*, is not easy, and concentration of spiritual thinking only to be aimed at as a counsel of perfection ! Well, does not this very lesson meet all such risks of depression and sense of helplessness ? Is not this the very mental condition, in relation to which the all-inspiring consciousness becomes most quickening ? He that keepeth you neither slumbers nor sleeps, neither fainteth nor is weary, nor makes the energy of His presence vary with the frames and feelings of those whom He is watching. He will not forget, or give you an excuse for forgetting ; He is not likely to let you think that He is such an one as yourself ; but also, for all that, He knows the measure of your powers, and will never betray your goodwill and steady desire to serve Him, to do your little portion of His work. Does He not know your resistance to temptation, even when you fail to conquer ; does He not recognise your purpose through the mist of self-deception and mistake ? Who is He that condemneth, but Christ who died, God who

justifieth—the faithful and true witness. He who died for you is all around you; stretch out your hand and lay hold on the Invisible. Trust Him, and by-and-by you shall have the experience of much more than your own weakness; but from the beginning you will find that you never cry to Him for help and are not helped. And He is calling you to a share of His own work, a share of the travail of His soul, a share of the victory that He won on the Cross, and a likeness, at all events in sympathy and love, to the suffering in which He won it. He is calling you to trials of faith and patience; to struggles against evil within and without; to labours and studies and disappointments that human nature cannot bear; to a view of life and death which, without the comfort of the presence, and the consciousness that it is the presence of the Lord Jesus, our God and brother, would be very like blank darkness. You must pray, and try, and persevere, as seeing Him who is invisible, realising by the Holy Ghost the presence of the Word, who is the true Light that lighteth every man that is born into the world, the Only Begotten who hath declared the God whom none hath seen at any time, who is in the bosom of the Father, and tells us that we are one in Him. He is the image of the invisible God; and although no man hath seen God at any time, if we love

one another God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us ; yes, His love who is before all things, and in Him all things consist, and He is the head of the body the Church, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all : “ He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.”

DIFFICULTIES

Who art thou, O great mountain?—ZECH. iv. 7.

Who hath despised the day of small things?—ZECH. iv. 10.

I should utterly have fainted, but that I believe verily to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. O tarry thou the Lord's leisure : be strong and He shall comfort thine heart : and put thou thy trust in the Lord.—PSALM xxvii. 13.

THE air of these days is full of hard questionings, many of them far too intricate to be treated in a half-hour's address, except so far as they can be met by one or two resolute counsels ; many of them, really all of them, considering that our trial of life or death turns on them, comparatively of great importance to us ; questions spiritual, which run at every point of practical action into questions temporal ; questions temporal, which, beginning outside the spiritual region, in matters political or economical, become, in the immediate results on any possible answer, of the deepest importance spiritually and morally as well ; questions intellectual, philosophical, historical, textual, what you will—the very enumeration which sug-

gests the personal one : how little *can* I understand, or *need* I work, or *must* I believe, or *can* I realise, that I may make sure of eternal life?

It is, we all know, a recognised extreme of folly to take mole-hills for mountains, or to stand by the brink of the stream that must be crossed, until the waters divide or are exhausted. It is not less a folly to treat mountains as mole-hills, when we have not faith to remove them, or to plunge into a fathomless stream without the assurance of the hand that shall be stretched out at our cry, "Lord save me, I perish." All things that constitute the trials of our faith, our faithfulness, our loyalty, our reality, our courage, our endurance, are great things to us, whatever they may seem in comparison with the great trials of past history, or however those that come after us may think meanly of them in a wisdom that they will have purchased by our experience.

I would characterise some of these questions, and yet I scarcely know at which end I can begin. Take, if it is to be taken only to be dismissed, the question of the temporal status of the Church, of our own Church. Is it to retain the character of a national, historical, established, endowed Church? In the intrinsic character of a national and historical Church, it cannot be shaken except by persecution to the point of extinction, whatever acceptance the claims

of the Roman Church may in the long run meet with ; or the claims of absolute and wanton liberty of opinion ; or however history may be falsified from either extremity. But in the other two points there are possibilities which any day may turn to probabilities, and there are those who would bid us go some way at least to meet them. To them the great mountain seems a mole-hill ; but we know that the result of the breakdown or destruction of the existing system means, for a time at least, the suspension of religious and spiritual action and influences throughout the whole of social life, as that social life has been developed in our own country ; that the temporal overthrow of the Church means the spiritual destitution of the nation, the captivity of the bride of Christ, the loss of the souls and lives that shall perish for lack of the word and training of the Gospel.

Another question : What about the unity of the body of Christ ? What can be done to promote union between the several religious communities which profess to believe in Christ and desire oneness in Him, and yet by their controversies and diversities make impossible the unity which He prayed for, and assures us must in the end be ? There are those to whom the mountains of controversial doctrine seem to be mole-hills ; the matters in which the sects differ insignificant in comparison

with those in which they agree. Let the law of union be made so wide that the minimum of belief may be insisted upon, and the maximum of union be made the law of corporate life.

But we know that the reality of belief in the things which men agree in is bound up inextricably with the belief of the things in which they differ ; that by variety of proof and variety of experience they have won their way to their present consistency, and that the sacrifice of their distinctive tenet means the casting away of that which is their hold, a slippery one it may be, but still the hold by which they grasp the deeper essential truth. It is asked how little belief will suffice for the unity of the conflicting elements of the body of the Lord ? How little, indeed !

Then the question of education : our children are to be taught religion under conditions which place the limitations of definite teaching in the hands of those who believe the least ; a popular delusion about dogmatic religion that cannot be made to see that the inculcation of a minimum is equivalent to the negation, not only of the maximum, but of all that is outside the minimum. If the choice arises between the acceptance of two sacraments as necessary to salvation and the denial of that necessity, the limitation of the former affirmation is an acceptance of the latter negation ;

the contradictories cannot be true together, and the *conditio prohibentis* rules the teaching. And is this a small thing?

But I will leave this side of the matter here. There are questions that lie even deeper. There are the questions, the answers of which I do not desire to prejudge, but which men are prone to look on with impatience even whilst they are prejudging them: such, for instance, as the relations of science and doctrine, and what is called the Higher Criticism of the Holy Scriptures. Are these matters mole-hills or mountains? stumbling-blocks or tests of a faith going forth conquering and to conquer?

It is no disparagement to the great men who, in the fulness of modern equipment, have undertaken these studies and their bearing on spiritual truth, to say that the result of their handling is, in too many cases, whatever it may be to themselves, to produce an impression on the popular mind that the old beliefs are passing away; and, on those who desire to hedge in their speculations on the life to come, to suggest the question, How little need I believe of my Bible or of the nature of divine things, of my Saviour and the character of His work, to avoid the condemnation of the unbeliever? How little is sufficient of belief, of prayer, of service! And even in the ritual ques-

tions with which religious divisions and discontents are so closely connected, can we not trace the same? How little need I worship, how little will justify me in taking my deposit of grace to my Lord and Master, and saying to Him, "Lo, there Thou hast that is Thine"? We trace this spirit of grudge, this minimising of exertion, of faith, of creed, of knowledge, of devotion in all the practical questions of the day; and we contrast it with the rule of the Saviour, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself;" or with the great sacrificial word of David, "All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee," of Thine own is all that we have to give Thee; we give Thee all. I said, this is not the time or occasion to *discuss* these questions; it is rather the time to inculcate the spirit in which they are to be met and handled, but only that in very summary outline.

We cannot blink them. We cannot say that they are small. They are mountains of difficulty; they will not become a plain before Zerubbabel, merely because he calls them so; the English nation will not be made more religious by the displacement and spoliation of the clergy even if it be told that dogma is sectarian and the alliance

between Church and State an evil itself that has worn out the show of usefulness. The Church will not get visible unity by people pretending to waive what they believe any more than by their pretending to profess what they do not believe; scepticism will not be routed by men who go half-way to meet it; education will not be made a moral influence by the careful elimination of the principles on which morality is based; faith will not become stronger by the questioning of all evidences, one after another, on which the theory of revealed religion rests; nor will worship become more spiritual by the successful contention that it must be left to the unguided emotion of the worshipper. There are fallacies which cannot be solved simply by walking; there are difficulties which are only made more terribly difficult by men's refusing to recognise them, trials which are all the more trying when we do not feel that we are being tried in them. How are we to deal with such things; how am I to advise these young men, who are putting on their armour, to go down to-day into the battle of the Lord, so that in the end they may achieve that joyful gladness, which, whether we live or die, in our own special region of life and labour is the guerdon in the end of the true-hearted?

The true-hearted! The word tells its own story,

the secret of those who have their heart right with the Lord's heart. How shall we face the trying questions in the whole armour of God? What is true-heartedness? First, it is reality; second, it is loyalty; third, it is courage to work and to suffer. "This is your victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Faith in Him who has founded His Church, who has given us the word of His Gospel, who has bidden us teach, and watch, and pray, and to try to be of one mind and of one heart. He is the beginning and the finishing of our faith; He in and to whom and by whom we need the reality, the loyalty, and the courage with which we are to bear our trial and earn our joyful gladness. First, do we know in whom we have believed? What is the Son of David to us? What is the Great Master Builder; has He, in the foundation of His Church, laid the foundation of our individual life? Is Jesus to us a historical character, a mere ideal, a philosophic model, a typical hero? Is He not to us the reality whom we have known, in direct relation, our hands handling, our eyes beholding, our ears hearing Him? Is He not as real as our own earthly father and mother have been, as our children are or will be? It must be so. And we must strive and wrestle until we have the blessing of the consciousness: I will not let Thee

go until then, and then I will never let Thee go, or Thou me.

Beloved, we know too well what unreality is: principles accepted without proving them; professions of belief without experimental vitality; enthusiasms caught by infection; mechanical observance of rules that dispense with conscious effort; the disposition to be satisfied with superficiality; the recognition of responsibilities with no effort to discharge them; the profession of goodwill without doing anything to prove it—can there be unreality in relation to the things and about the person of Him who is the upholder of all things, the Jesus who has made us His own, and whom we say that we have made our own? We would not draw our idea of spiritual reality from a mere grouping of unrealities, for surely if it is the contradictory of all these it is also much infinitely more. To know Him, and to be sure that we are known of Him; to find not only pleasure and comfort, but strength also in prayer; to be absolutely confident in His faithfulness: He hath promised, His word is sure; He hath spoken, His judgment is infallible; He has died, and died for me, risen, and I am risen in Him; borne sin, even my sin, made atonement, even atonement for me. This is something of what He is, of what He is to me;

this is something of what you have to preach, and in the strength of which you are to live, and in the working of which you are to prove yourselves. God help us, we do believe, help our unbelief.

And is it around Him that the controversies of the day are raging, and the crucial questions of truth or falsehood being debated? Is it His body that is to suffer spoliation, His word that is to be tortured to various meanings, His Gospel that is to be critically analysed, always from the side of negation, His little ones that are to be the bone of contention among selfish parties, the souls that He has died for the prizes of a faction fight? Even so. Then where is the loyalty of the true-hearted?—if He slay me yet will I trust in Him. Whether I live or die, He is mine and I am His. These things must be, and we cannot see the end. “Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.” Realise the relation between yourself and your Lord, then identify yourself with the cause that you have chosen, wait and work until He shall show the end. This loyalty is no mere euphemism for self-will. It sacrifices and effaces self. Now and again there are great demands upon it; now and then, as in some of the questions which I have indicated, there comes a call upon it which it

cannot understand, a difficulty to master through which, with all its sincerity and all the penetrating power of its experience, it cannot at present see; inconsistencies of evidence which it cannot reconcile, stumbling-blocks in dilemma which it cannot solve, choices of action which keep it long in suspense, before faith is vouchsafed the light that is the path, the ordered path of the just. Often and often the loyal and true-hearted soldier has to act on a hidden purpose, an unintelligible, an arbitrary direction from Him who has made him a soldier. Often and often has the pilgrim to content himself with the sight of but one of the stepping-stones on which he has to cross the river: "I do not ask to see the distant scene; keep Thou my feet." "Thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name; because thou hast kept the word of My *patience*, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation." The loyal soul often and often has to content itself with the dictum of the Master and to act on reasons which it cannot fathom in matters on which it cannot argue. It accepts implicitly the divine word. As He speaks it, so I believe it. What is the method of the resurrection? what the nature of the action of the sacraments? what the theory of inspiration? what the speed or

slowness of the world's restoration? what the meaning of eternity? what the signs of the coming of the kingdom? I cannot tell, but He has told me *that the dead shall rise*, and He has told me that *he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*; He has said, *This is My body, and this is My blood*; He has appealed to the miracles as evidence, and to the Scriptures of the Old Testament as the witnesses of His authority; He has said, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me. And when I preach that Gospel, and read that Bible, and administer those sacraments, and receive those ministers, *as He gives them, so I receive them*, trying to enter into His mind, but content to wait until, face to face, He makes clear to me that which I see now as in a glass darkly; when, knowing as I am known, I shall see the fragments, the segments, and sections of the great circle of truth, all set in their places, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed. Is this loyalty an abnegation of the powers that were given us to be freely exercised? It is no abnegation; it is a devotion, and the service in that devotion is perfect freedom, my heart is right with thy heart; "Seek ye my face! Thy face, Lord, am I seeking."

And last, there is the courage of the true-hearted, courage to undertake, courage to undergo ; the faithful enterprise of the champion of the Lord, the faithful endurance of the martyr, the faithful patience of the pilgrim. Are WE to be champions or tried witnesses ?

Pray, beloved, for those who to-day are to be consecrated to this work. Before them lies much work, small guerdon as to the things of the world ; little profit, little praise, such little profit and little praise as comes at all, coming rather, it may be, as a temptation than as a reward ; weariness and painfulness, many calls for watching when the eyes are worn out, and for fighting when the hands would hang down ; the trials of disappointment, of experiment that leads no whither, of hopes that end in despair, of questionings that end in a deadlock, of prayers that seem to get no answer. Pray for the true-heartedness that in the strength of Christ will face and work and see joyful gladness, through all these, and more ; more, for with all our experience we cannot all realise one another's trials, and each heart, besides all other burdens, has its own bitterness, but a joy with which the stranger cannot meddle. Pray for the assured blessing for us, and for these, and for yourselves, the reality of the apostolic true-heartedness. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ? I am persuaded that

neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature ; speculative difficulties, practical contradictories, insoluble questionings, or unintelligible solutions—nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

REWARDS

I AM going now to say a word about the fourth point which I mentioned on Tuesday afternoon as one of the principal and crucial test points of our thoughts in preparation for Sunday : the reward of the faithful minister of Jesus Christ. What shall we have, therefore, if we leave all and follow Him ? What shall be the result to us ourselves, now and hereafter, of a self-forgetting execution of our mission, a careful and hearty devotion to His work, sustained by His ever-present support, and entitled by His grace to a share of its character and also of its reward ? I wish to press upon you, not perhaps an extreme view of what is now called *altruism*, by which I mean that transcendental idea of self-sacrifice which regards the sacrifice of self as the greater object than the good for which self is sacrificed, but the distinct view that as our mission is a mission in faith, and our work a work in faith, and our strength a power realised by faith, so our reward is one that has inducements to offer only to faith, and is itself, so

far as this present life of probation is concerned, visible and comprehensible to faith alone.

Earthly rewards, natural and temporal rewards, are of course open to all who in any profession give themselves with heart and head to their work ; and professional rewards are before the eyes of the ministers of the Church, as well as before the lawyer or the physician. But these rewards seldom, in God's providence, come to those who set themselves in competition for them ; it is not the pushing lawyer or the advertising physician, so it is not the ambitious self-asserting clergyman, who gets even this measure of success in life. Promotion comes to those who love their work, be that work what it may, and it comes bringing with it more work and better opportunities. He who loves his work cannot despise his work ; and he who seeks advancement for advancement's sake can scarcely be said to be innocent of the charge of despising his work. It is not well to be too hard on human weakness, and when we know what is the lot of poverty, anxiety, and privation, to which in very many cases ministerial work consigns a man for life, it would be hard indeed to condemn the natural wish for advancement ; but as a reward, as wages of service, as a thing to be constantly and often before the mind, it is a snare and a distraction ;

a thought to be kept under, to be prayed against constantly as one of the greatest drawbacks on the true devotion which should mark the pastoral work.

Many minds, however, which would revolt from the thought of place hunting, are open to the temptation to regard success in work as a reward to be coveted and set consciously before them. It is strange that such an idea is one that you require to be cautioned against, because the very conception of desire of such success as I speak of must come very near to an earnest longing for the saving of the souls of the flock committed to us and increasing the glory of God ; but it is certain that such success is not a real reward in such a sense as we should construe God's rewards. The visible security of such success is often denied to the most laborious workers, the most self-denying, the most able of God's servants. They often pass away without being allowed to see any such seal of their ministry ; and great triumphs of preaching and reforms and revivals are often seen to be the results of very inferior and less devoted labour. A certain measure of the love of his people, a certain amount of good influence, a certain quantum of satisfaction in the results of work, and a certain discharge of conscience con-

sequent on duty well and carefully done, must in all ordinary cases fall to a devoted parish priest; but the less he looks upon that as a reward, the less he looks upon it as a mark of something already to be attained and to be satisfied with, so much the better for himself and his work also. If the man who has such success is apt to be unduly elated, he who has it not is liable to be too much discouraged. It is wiser far—nay, it is the only wisdom, to let that side of the work lie at the view of the Master only: not always taking stock and counting heads, but having the souls of your people at your heart without counting them; watching and working patiently as your Lord does, but not measuring and taking averages; watching and working individually, leaving to Him the counting of the draught on the day when the net is drawn to the shore.

Do not think that I mean to tell you to content yourselves with the thought—I have done my duty, I have preached the word, it is God's lookout where the increase is to come on what Paul plants and Apollos preaches; that be far from you, it is a thought that will not even suggest itself to him who is working in the love of his work and in the love of souls. The man who preaches so as to discharge conscience with a full discharge is

the man who loves both the word and the flock, and none other. But the mere discharge of conscience, like the mere love of success, or the mere ambition for a larger field of work, is no worthy object for any man who has taken on him the yoke and burden that you are going to take.

The true reward of faithful ministry is a reward appreciable to faith alone; in this life a warranted, well-warranted consciousness that we are working with our Lord, and on His authority, and by His help; and in the future, if we may lift up our eyes to it, a revelation of a share in the victory that overcomes the world: love of Him and those for whom He died joining us now in heart to Him; and by-and-by a more perfect consciousness, a more completely realised and recognised share in that with which He, having travailed, is satisfied. Other happy consequences will follow, not certainly in this life; we may be granted to see some fruit of labour, some proof of ministry, some love of our people: precious exceedingly such signs are, under and subordinate to the great consciousness, but without it (and who is sufficient for these things?) nothing at all. The clergy are spoken of often as the Lord's inheritance or lot; happy is that minister, and a truly happy minister he alone is, who can confidently invert the

word and say, "The Lord Himself is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup ; He is my reward, He is my strength, His work is mine, it is He that sends me." May we all, in His good time, come to that assurance. He that loves Him loves His work, and he that loves Him and His work is loved of Him, and in that has his full reward now and for ever ; it shall not be taken away.

UNREALITY

THE word "Unreality" comes in to the discussion on the topics that I have to put before you on these days of preparation, perhaps more constantly and persistently than it is pleasant to think of; certainly in a way that is suggestive of some very serious consideration. You are offering yourselves for a work the extent and pressure of which you cannot realise, or be expected to realise as yet, notwithstanding the teaching that you have had, and the discipline with which you have, I trust, tried to train yourselves.

Can there be an unreality in the very act of profession, the fulfilment of which has yet to be revealed by an experience from which, if you realised it now, you might almost incline to withdraw yourselves at the last moment? Or again, you can look forward to days of divine worship, which you are very sensible will not always find you prepared, heart and soul, for the full, and dutiful, and thoughtful, and concentrated devotion that both the rule of the Church and the confidence which your people put in you rightfully

expect to be forthcoming. Or yet again, in the cure of the souls of your people, you will be called upon to give advice, and to prescribe rules, and to reprove, and to comfort also, in matters of which you have yourself had no practice, no trial, and, it may be, very little temptation. And it may be, even much more in dealing with outsiders, in the measure in which you know that you are expected to let your light shine before men, that they may glorify your Father which is in heaven, as the author and empowerer of the good life which you try to live, but which, every time your conscience rouses itself to judgment, it must tell you that you signally fail to live.

Now, in all these ways and in many more ways, when we try to judge ourselves as we judge other people, we find that our hearts condemn us. We judge of the reality of other people, in their religion, their social morality, their profession, and their practice: such a one, we say, does not realise the serious character of his obligation, or the dignity of his profession, or the counsels of perfection that he lays down for other people—it is quite possible that you are judging of me at this moment in this very way; such a one is perfunctory in his service, timid and idle in his preaching, careless in visitation, not careful in

his talk, or discreet or circumspect, and so on, without any distinct breach of charity, but with a matter-of-fact acceptance of the idea that you know all about the people you are thinking of.

Now, I need not say that you would resent being judged by others in this way. Of course you would ; but that is not the point, nor has it anything to do with what I want you to think of now.

Try to look at your own life and conduct through the same medium and in the same light, and you will realise at least this much : you do not always put your whole heart into the services that you are going through, in church or out of church ; you do not always put the strong force and stream of desire into the prayers, that in word breathe a very hearty desire, for the things that you know you ought to ask for with hearty desire ; that, in the very most solemn acts of worship, wandering thoughts are not checked ; right purpose is taken for granted, and little pains taken to keep it up ; and, unhappily, in your personal ministrations to your people, you find yourselves, as I said just now, teaching, prescribing, advising things which you have learned are the right things to teach, prescribe, and advise, but which have not to yourselves the biting reality of experience, trial, temptation, suffering, which would, you truly

think, put you in deeper, more intelligent sympathy with them.

I put this point, then, the most urgently, because, whilst you can convince yourselves *a priori* of the fact of unreality in the former points, it is only experience that can bring this third point directly home to you ; and experience, when it is brought home, may make things very miserable to you ; may make you even rebel against God, who has suffered you to undertake such work without the equipment it needs, and so incline to cast it off and say that you undertook it under no such impossible conditions. You have tried to do your best, you will try no more ; or you have fulfilled the letter of your obligation, let Him see that what more is wanted is not lacking in other means. All this, however common, is a very unhappy, a very fatal conclusion. Well, to say no more, our hearts condemn us when we judge of our own reality as we commonly judge of other men's. God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things ; knoweth all things, but even He cannot know what does not exist at all ; He cannot make real in account that which is absent in fact ; He will impute faith for righteousness, but how can He see a faith that is not ?

Well then, the first thing to secure is that there

is a faith of purpose, of persistence, of sympathetic earnestness, on which looking He can say, "Neither do I condemn thee." But we go, we must go, further, we cannot help, at all events, trying to judge of our faithfulness by the results of our work, the results on our own life and on theirs to whom we minister; and then even the most superficial examination of results depresses us and may, God forbid it, may shake the very faith by which we trust that our efforts are accepted for what they are worth. Every clergyman who has ever had parish work has this experience. His work may be very happy work; he knows that he is working with God and for God; his sympathies are with his people, he loves them, bears their sins in a sort of way and carries their sorrows; he sees them as innocent children, loving and beloved, watches for them and prays for them through the critical times of their lives, sees their affection withdrawn from him, turned into carelessness, or even into hostility; hopes betrayed, confidence betrayed, prayers unanswered; and then, after years of labour it may be, things worse than they were when he began; and it makes the heart very sick, and the sickness of the heart brings doubt as to all that has gone before: I am no better than my fathers!

No. Why should you look for more satisfaction in the travail of your soul than your Lord had, or fear to be a castaway on the evidence of results which are really not within your judgment at all? I put this point again strongly. And I would help you to the answer. In all such judgment we are prone to think more about ourselves than about God, who is using us for His work, working in us, through us, and we working together with God. We think, I say, not perhaps too much about ourselves, but too little about Him, His patience, His election, His all-seeingness, His all-lovingness. It is a very sweet and solemn and simple lesson of the Saviour, not a sparrow falls to the ground but He has a care, and ye are of more value than many sparrows. He is greater than our heart, more loving than our heart, more wise, more hopeful, more mighty; He shall bring His own purpose to effect, blessing or destroying, or showing infinite mercy, and yet not clearing the guilty; but of a surety never casting away His servants who have tried to do His work. We are not alone; He does work with us and He will; He can see results that we cannot see; He can direct the arrow when we draw the bow at a venture; He does not reckon with us as if there were no other responsibility for the results that dismay us. He continueth faithful; He can-

not deny Himself; and we know whom we have believed.

But when all is said and done, and we are sure of the firmness of our faith, which indeed is not our own, but is a gift of God; when we have become conscious that it is His work that we are doing, that He is working with us, so that not all depends upon our personal act, or our transient feeling, for He that keepeth Israel doth neither slumber nor sleep; when we have realised that His judgment of us is the judgment of one who knows all about us, and who knowing our weakness when He trusted us, is always watching to avert the failure of that weakness in the effecting of the purpose that He sets before us—when we have got all this before our mind and memory, still we feel altogether inadequate to return the answer we want to return, to the questioning of our heart; we are conscious of relaxed and constantly relaxing energy; we are conscious that the words of our prayers, our creeds, our praises, imply, in boundless disproportion, vastly more than we put into them; that we do preach doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness that we have learned with the hearing of the ear, but not with the eyesight of spiritual understanding.

Yes; and yet we know that we are no hypo-

crites ; that we believe what we say, that the thoughts which we really put before our people are the thoughts that we believe would be the true thoughts for ourselves if we ever found ourselves in the same circumstances. We know that, in our most perfunctory prayers, we have a purpose of asking God for the things that we have knelt down and begun to pray for, or that we have come to church to pray for ; that it is not our heart, but our transient thought, that has wandered as we say the words, and that surely it is to the constant desire, even rather than to the struggling petition that His ear is open and attent in heaven His dwelling-place ; but He disregards neither, even if our whole realised prayer is, Give me relief and rest.

So we assure ourselves, but we are not satisfied with our consolations, nor content to think of the groanings that cannot be uttered, with which His Spirit would be helping our infirmities, sustaining us in the effort which, without His guidance, we do not know how to make. Surely we might be more sure : thus far His power has brought me, I have a desire, I have an energy, I have some power, I have a strong Helper, whence comes this sense of flat unprofitableness ? Why, the very sense of it is an evidence against the faint-heartedness which understates all

that is for me, and overstates all that is against me. Why can I not bear up better? No; I know that I am not trying to deceive God; and surely, again, He would never let me deceive myself so. In Thee have I trusted; it is for Thee, my Lord, to see that I shall not be confounded *in æternum*. Well, I do not need to apologise to you for putting before you now a thought that must seem discouraging; and I think that my justification is in the certainty that the misgivings that I have been speaking of must come to every minister of God who has set his Master's work always before him. They will come to you if you are the men that I believe and hope that you are. God knows that they are a trial, but they need not be a temptation to be content with failure.

As you know them for a trial, let the knowledge be a guard against temptation; do not give up one single observance because you cannot throw yourself heart and mind, soul and strength, into the whole of it, at all times and under all circumstances. You have forms of prayer, forms of service; forms of prayer, for instance, which ask for a variety of blessings that you very likely desire with very different degrees of intensity. You are thankful for them and use them; and you know your wants. But although you are quite sincere in praying for the Royal Family or the High Court of

Parliament, you would scarcely say that you throw as much earnestness into those petitions as you do into the Collects or the prayer of Confession, or your prayers for your children. This uncertainty is incidental to all forms of prayer, but it is less of a peril than the following of extempore prayer ; for you certainly do know that you are asking for things which God is pleased to grant, and for things which you are bound as good Christians to ask Him for, letting all your petitions with thanksgiving be made known to Him who is not displeased if the due offering of thanks and praise does not reach the standard or balance of the sanctuary. So if you find a difficulty in this, let it be an inducement to hold on ; God would not let you be tried so if it were not a part of His process to make you more lively and instant in the work, if He did not think you worth trying.

When it comes, however, to the matter of private prayer and intercession, I can give you no special advice other than that which I should give to any one without your special calls and exigencies ; and yet I think that, for a clergyman, the temptation to wander in such prayers is greater than it can be to those on whom the obligation lies less urgently. Still, the advice is the same : do not be content with words, or you will run the risk of being content to wander ; and never rise from your knees

until you have got into focus before the eye of your mind the thing, the person, the exigency about which you are speaking to God. If, I should say to a father or mother, you are praying for your children, let the face and circumstance and condition of each be present ; God will see more than you see, and will grant more than you ask for, but He must see that you see and that you realise that He sees. He holds His hand ready ; take it and rise to Him, the Father who sent the Son will draw all whom the Son sends, and He sends you. Something like the same advice is all that I can give you as to the proving of your work in the direct department of spiritual ministration : Never be content with generalities ; no generality ever healed a deep wound, and the very special treatment which may be effective for one man will be sadly useless, disappointingly useless, applied to another. Every case must be looked at as an individual case, and every individual case requires that true sympathy which experience will by God's grace direct into the proper channel. No rules of casuistry, no methods of pastoral energy, useful and necessary as they are, and must be, can supply the individuality with which the parish priest has to learn to deal with his people ; no two cases are the same to them, the cases that seem most alike will turn out to have their special and several individuality to Him.

God Himself does not confine His spiritual dealing to the masses—He does not deal with generalities; the pastor in his preaching has to prove his arms by his knowledge of the several souls that are before him, and in the closer discipline by an identification which, as I have said more than once in this course of addresses, is in a faint and distant and yet true and real way an entrance into a part of the identification of the Good Shepherd. You may read and study books and men and women, methods and ideals, but the great ideal is to get heart to heart with your people, and so find yourselves heart to heart with your Lord. May He who alone can prepare you fit and strengthen you for this lesson of lessons.

FEAR AND POWERS

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.—2 TIM. i. 7.

THESE words occur as a part of the apostle's exhortation to Timothy, urging him to a courageous and steadfast maintenance of the position and work that he had undertaken, for which he had been prepared by early training, and by the experience of the faith of those who had gone before him, and in which he had been initiated and commissioned and empowered by the laying on of the apostle's hands. "*Wherefore,*" he says, "*I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands, for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*" What may have been the apostle's motive in cautioning Timothy against the tendency to fear, we need not now inquire; and what was the special character of the gift that was given to Timothy, we cannot, and I trust we need not, now discuss. The gist of the verse, which I have taken for the text, lies in the antithesis

between the spirit of fear, which is said to be not of the gift of God, and the spirit of power and love and sound mind, which is a part of that gift. We do not presume to limit the gift that is spoken of in the sixth verse, the *χάρισμα*, by the three graces which are spoken of in the seventh verse; and, indeed, the use of the words *gift* and *given* in the two verses is not a direct representation of the original language. Undoubtedly, great as are the gifts of the seventh verse, the *χάρισμα* involves more of qualification, and of authority, as well as of endowment; but we may fairly infer that these three graces are the gifts by which the tendency to fearfulness is to be counteracted in those who have received the great gift, which Timothy had received, and who have need, as he had, to be exhorted to stir it up into flame. The spirit of fear, or fearfulness, or cowardice, as we might almost render it, only we think that St. Paul would have hardly thought it necessary to warn Timothy that the more despicable phase of the fearfulness he speaks of could not have shown itself in him by the grace of God: he could not need to be warned that the mere weakness of timidity was no spirit of God; the spirit of fearfulness, that would make him shrink from stirring up the gift that was in him—What is it? Is it not known to us,

is it not even working in us, is there not cause for it, is it not justifiable, is it avoidable or resistible, is it not treasonable? yes, treasonable!

Dearly beloved, is there not in us and around us a tendency to so minimise the duties and responsibilities of the vocation wherewith we are called, so to confound the lines that divide the believer from the unbeliever, the Christian from the non-Christian, the churchman from the non-churchman, the clergyman from the layman, the very distinct orders of the clergy amongst themselves—a tendency that is to disregard the diversity of gifts and duties and responsibilities that belong to us in our several capacities,—as almost to amount to ignoring, to shirking of the recognition of gifts, duties, responsibilities, and certainly to amount to a cowardly reticence as to any reception of any grace of God at all? Is there not a tendency to minimise the doctrines of grace, and the sacraments of grace, and all the special marks of gift and privilege, as well as duty, which He has given to those whom He has called out of the world, not to be of the world, and yet to be of the salt of the earth?

Then again, and quite in another direction, only of the very same cowardice, there is the spirit of alarmism. Oh, we are not afraid to call ourselves Christians, or churchmen, or clergymen, but what

is the good? A change is coming over society, not only over religious life, but over the whole of social life: the old landmarks are being removed, the old safeguards are being demolished, the class framework of the world is being turned upside down—what is the use of protesting, what is the use of provoking animosities, what is the use of aggravating inconsistencies, or of making quarrels irreconcilable? What is the use of struggling to defend that which is doomed to early extinction? Let the deluge come, let it come all the sooner, that we may know whether we can sink or swim. Yes, there is an impatience that comes of the very spirit of ignoble fear. And to look nearer home, to look at our own selves, as we often do look at our own selves, just as if our sufficiency were of our own selves: How many are the sorts of fearfulness that whirl and circle round the simple "*I, by myself, I*"? I cannot do or say this or that, for what would the world say about me? How soon it would find me out; how hard names it would call me! I should be a party man, marked and branded if I said this or did that. It is not my duty to take a line where my elders and betters are at fault; it is not for me to claim an authority of which I cannot produce a warrant that, to the world without, will carry conviction, just as if the world without would ever listen at all to a man who has not what it calls the

courage of his convictions. I must needs do as those around me do—nothing startling: just as if men did not want startling, just as if any man could run with the hare and hunt with the hounds, that is, act up to his convictions and smother his convictions at the same time.

Or, again, exactly the reverse, but all still centering in and whirling round the "I, by myself, I," I must take a line for myself; I must do something startling or they will not believe that I am sincere; I must do something rash to prove that I am not the coward that I know that I am, and that I am afraid men will soon find out that I am.

Or again, and quite other, the fearfulness that comes of despondency, yet not the less of faithless or imperfect faith at the best: What good am I doing? what single soul have I succeeded in keeping back from sin, or lifting up out of the mire of the pit? What can I do, what am I doing to stay the oncoming of wickedness that I see approaching in my own circle, in my own parish? Have not the events of the last fortnight shown me how little those whom I have loved, loved me, or those whom I have cared for cared for me; how little weight my words have had with those who professed to respect me, and how little, with all my teaching, I have taught them of the value of the things that seem to me of all

earthly things the most to be honoured and cherished ? The more one looks around, the more one looks within, the more forms of the fault that we are warned against loom in on us ; without are fightings, within are fears ; who and in what strength can any be sufficient for these days and these things and this calling ? God help us all. I need not, as the apostle does not, speak of that ignoble cowardice that shirks the duty that may involve mere personal discomfort, or the fear of man in its common meaning, which none need to be cautioned cannot co-exist with the grace of God.

Now here are the gifts that He bestows on His servants, counteracting and expelling the spirit of fearfulness in all its forms : "the spirit of power and love and soberness." *Look at each by itself*: the spirit of power ; the indwelling of the divine strength which is realised by a working faith ; the spirit in which the apostle declares that he can do all things through Christ ; in which faith can remove mountains ; in which in word and deed, in courage, and industry, and energy, we have the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. This spirit of power it is in which the preacher of the word is bold to rebuke vice, to preach the truth instantly in season, out of season ; to reprove, rebuke, exhort ; to maintain the standard of his Master ; not being

ashamed, as St. Paul says, of the testimony of our Lord, or of the cause for which, even to imprisonment, the will of the world is set against the discipline of the word. It is the power that sustains his courage and hopefulness in the most adverse and depressing and discouraging circumstances ; the assurance that, in his work and in his struggle, there is working in him and with him the rewarder of all diligence, the winner and bestower of all victory. O soldier and servant of the Saviour, dost thou not yet know who teacheth thine hands to war and thy fingers to fight, who clothes thee in His armour, whose word it is that is powerful in thy mouth, whose strength it is that is made perfect in thy weakness ? Lie prostrate before Him, forget thine own self, put away the thought of thine authority, thy dignity, thy coveted wealth and fame and rest ; put away from thee even the thought that the Lord hath need of thee ; put away from thee the thought of reward, except in the conscious union of heart and work and will with Him who has called thee ; be content to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. O man, greatly beloved, greatly privileged in the call to this thy work, fear not, peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong, try to realise the strength of the gift of the spirit of power. In the realisation of the power of which we are made

partakers we have the antidote to the fearfulness about ourselves and our work which we have a right to look for from Him who calls us. We know in whom we have believed, and in Him have assurance of hope unto the end; we work in His strength, not in our own; therefore, doing what we can with our might, we are not fearful as to the issue of our own shortcomings; He is the winner of the battle, and He gives us a share that we must not betray. True it is that we have to fight as if on our arm alone the victory would turn; unless every soldier fights so, where would the fate of battle be? But we fight also in the full knowledge that in His power one shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight! As for ourselves, we have no fear whilst our trust is in Him; as for the Zion that we fight for, the Lord is in the midst of her, therefore she shall not be moved; He is for one and all our hope and strength, only make trial of the power by working and praying and trusting. Essay by experience the strength of the armour of God.

Next, the spirit of love: can we see how *that* casts out fearfulness? Surely there is no fear in love; perfect love casteth out fear in more ways than one. We know this by the analogy of human affections; and, of human affections, can we not

see that they are engendered after the pattern of Him of whom all and every fatherhood and family in heaven and earth is named. Who is not courageous to defend the children, the beloved, the trusted friend, the deposit committed to his love? In this there is no collusive relation between anxious thought and faithless cowardice. The very anxiety of love thwarts the tendency to fearful desertion of duty; the very anxiety nerves the hand, and concentrates the force of thought, and kindles resolution, and quickens the brain. Is it not to be so here? You, my brother, are entering into a share of the care of Jesus; you are entering into a portion of the travail of His soul who so loved the world. Love is strong as death; there is no misgiving here as to the power or the will of Him to whose heart we bring our hearts close. The people whom He has given us to love are those whom He Himself loves, and by our love of them He tests our love of Him. Surely cowardice here is a double treason; doubt is itself betrayal. It is to them that we are to speak the truth in love, and in the courage that will risk alienation, and even enmity, rather than evade a duty; but the truth spoken in love and courage will not fail of its errand—no, though it may come to you as to the apostle himself for a time, the more you love

your people the less you will be loved. After all, it is not for yourself to be loved that you do your work; it is for Him to win it, and He will bide His time. It is in them that we are to work our work for Him; never to weary of their tiresome ways, never to be sick of their commonplace characters, never to be provoked by their sullen hostility or by their insincere complaisance. The work has to be done, the prayer to be prayed, the sorrow to be borne, the sins to be grieved over, the way to be smoothed; yes, and the conscience to be roused; yes, and everything to be endured for those for whom He endured to die. Whose sorrow was ever like to His? And our love, God grant the spirit to us all, that suffereth long and is kind, that seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things; aye, and fears nothing to be done or to be borne for Him and His. Charity never faileth; patience hath her perfect work.

Last, the spirit of soberness, or of a sound mind, or of self-discipline, the spirit that trains to temperance and self-command and self-restraint and self-sacrifice; for the word which St. Paul

uses is one of wide application and of a special connotation, a combination of moral and intellectual as well as of spiritual qualities. It is the habit of temperance in the widest meaning, the balance of the mind and the heart, of the affections and the judgment, purity of life keeping the eyes of the reason and understanding clear and open : a sound heart and a sound judgment. Such a gift is surely the needful complement of the other two : of the power that can attempt all things in faith in Him who has given the word, of the love that can endure all things for the sake of those to whom He has sent us ; the clear head and sound heart, that will give practical application to the power and the love, sound heart and clear head that will keep self under command, and with self all the fears that self-love may inspire, all the alarms that self-esteem and self-conceit and self-engrossment may raise to turn the energies of the minister of God away from His work for his people. There is much, indeed, in the gift of a sound mind, a calm spirit, a sympathetic, considerate spirit, a spirit not liable to false enthusiasm, but ready for any real work ; a spirit that does not waste its energy, but never begrudges exertion ; a spirit that by doing the Master's will enters more and more daily into the mind of the

Master, learning the reasons of His commands by obeying them, justifying the wisdom as it shines more and more clearly through finished service, seeing the new openings for duty that the doing of duty reveals to him to whom the work of duty is the work also of power and of love.

Beloved, surely the lesson is a lesson for these days and for this day, and to you. Here is the gift; here is the risk. Not, it may be, to be ashamed of the testimony, the temptation which St. Paul cautions his disciple against; of that we fondly think that even in these days we have little apprehension. We, we think, scarcely need to be told not to be ashamed of Christ; but the fearfulness that lays one man open to that sort of temptation lays a thousand open to the other temptations of cowardice, faithless discouragement, heartless and spiritless and loveless perfunctoriness in the discharge of a duty which should employ heart, spirit, intellect, mind, soul, and strength. Pray, my brother, and you, too, who owe your prayers for him who is now entering on the fulness of his vocation as a minister, pray you for him, that God will abundantly pour on him the gifts that are needed: power and love and self-discipline; to meet and counteract the fear of man, and the fear for self, and the fear for the future, and the

fear of anxiety, the fear of alarmism, the fear of a faithless heart which cannot trust Him who has promised. God does not give the spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a sound mind, in a clean and free and true heart. So may it be. So shall it be with you who trust in Him.

LET NO MAN DESPISE THEE

Let no man despise thee.—TITUS ii. 15.

But be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.—I TIM. iv. 12.

THE servant is not above his Master, nor the disciple above his Lord ; it is enough for the servant that he be as his Master. And his Master was despised and rejected of men ; and He who was so despised and rejected tells His disciples that they must expect the same : If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you ; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me, and he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me. There are circumstances in which such despising is a matter of blessing : “Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.” *Falsely*, mind you, *and for My sake*. Those two saving words take us out of the dilemma into which the apostle’s words in the text which I have chosen seem to be likely to lead us : “Let no man despise thee.”

I am not sure that these are not days in which special circumstances make it specially necessary to take this counsel specially to heart. We all know it, as a commonplace of religious history, that there are many varied ways in which the servants of God are tried, and that at different periods, the real hostility of the world to the Church being steadily the same, different methods of trial colour the history of the Church ; and the use of one set of worldly weapons seems for the time to supersede the use of another set ; and, by consequence, the need of vigilance on one side of the camp seems to dispense with the need of vigilance on the other. There have been days of fiery persecution quite incompatible with any idea or theory of contempt—days of fearful hatred ; there have been days of apparent prosperity, and of the dangers of ease and success and influence ; ages of wealth and power as well as of impotence and humiliation ; and theories of a kingdom that is of this world before the time, and of rest when there has been no victory.

God gives wisdom to His wise to see the trial as it comes and when ; there is a voice of joy and health in the dwellings of the righteous even when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall ; there is, and always has been, in the time of the greatest slackness, a cry in the churches,

"Awake, awake," who sayest, "I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked."

Now, it sometimes strikes one that these days are, for the children of the kingdom, and most especially for the ministers of the word of God, rather like days of despising. I do not see why we should blink the issues of the question; and it is very necessary, as the question has arisen, that we should try to clear our conceptions of the circumstances, and make out how far it is a true statement, how far it is our own fault that it is true, and in what way we can turn the trial, if it is a trial, to profit. If we are despised, that is, we must be careful to guard against such content with the world's contempt as will lead us to shelter ourselves under the general idea that Christ's servants must expect to be despised, forgetful of the duty that lies upon us all, that Christ's service must not be made despicable by our unworthiness. Now there are some things in the popular literature of the day, and in the tone of social intercourse which popular literature reflects and exaggerates, that show signs this way. And there is a tone in newspaper writing, and in political speaking, sometimes a tone of patronage and sometimes of disparage-

ment, a tone which seems to convey an idea of supercilious and complacent superiority.

We are all of us, I imagine, to some extent familiar with the treatment of the clerical character in popular fiction ; the constant occurrence of grotesque types of curate, rector, and bishop, utterly unlike anything in our experience, unless indeed it be ourselves that are photographed unconsciously—for what we see to be true of no one else may be true of ourselves—drawn in lines and colours and invested with habits, and made to speak and think and act, in ways and on motives and with results conceivable only on a hypothesis of wilful misrepresentation, or of absolute ignorance coloured by professional dislike. We know at once the type of the Low Churchman, the High Churchman, and the Broad Churchman in fiction, and how the balance of the plot is weighted by the supposed sincerity, or the gratuitous hypocrisy, or the self-complacent impracticability of the types and characters. Possibly some of you know how these things are treated on the stage as well as in story-books. Anyhow, the readers of newspapers and of the speeches of public men know that it is the fashion to treat religious questions as mere academic theories, and the men concerned with them as living in a world outside of reasonable comprehension, and busying themselves with

matters material only in the eye of schools and parties. I cannot, I need not, now and here give illustrations; but you all know how, for instance, the question of religious teaching is contested, and what is the nature of the arguments by which the need of it is defended or the requirements minimised. In all this there is contempt of a sort, a despising which, as it is very provocative, is correspondingly a mode of trial.

Perhaps I am wrong in attaching so much importance to these outward signs, but where we know, both by bitter experience and by divine warnings, that there does exist the deep and strong current of hostility of the world and the course of it to the Church and the service of it, we cannot be too careful in our estimate even of the smallest matters. They may be, they are, a part of the trial of the faithful; only the faint-hearted will faint under them; the weak may be irritated by them into foolish self-assertiveness; the strong may be provoked to a wrath that is itself a snare, or to a contempt which tempts to cynicism or recklessness: all have a duty on them that that which is good be not evil-spoken of by their fault. "Let no man despise thee." And how? The words of the apostle to Timothy, the parallel passage to the text, referring more explicitly to the person to whom he was writing, are, "Let no man despise

thy youth ; ” and it is a word of caution that this explicit reference makes, I think, more specially telling to the younger men who are taking on themselves the vows and responsibilities of the ministerial office. The consideration follows very naturally on the thought that I tried to work out last night. I must not, indeed, press the words of St. Paul addressed to one of the chief instruments of the building up of the Church, Be thou an example of the believers, *τύπος τῶν πίστων*, an ensample to them that believe—I must not press the words as being of direct and equal cogency in the case of the young men who are ordained to-day. The thought that you are to be an example to the faithful may well be toned down to the thought that you are, each one of you, to live as one whom they need not be ashamed to take as an example. But it certainly means not less than that. Your idea must be to live so that neither believer nor unbeliever, neither the hostile critic nor the condescending patron, shall see in you anything that shall justify him in despising you as a type or specimen of what believers are, or despising other believers because he sees something to be despised in you. The exhortation and advice comes to you, not merely with reference to the inner life ; the light that is in you, that the Father of Light, the Son, the Light of the World, the Holy Ghost, the

Spirit of Light, lighteth in you, is to shine out in your life before men : you are to be an example that shall not be despised. And in five or six ways the clue is put into your hands : "in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

Again, mind you, this is not an exhaustive rule of discipline, comprehensive though it seems ; it is the prescription of the type that may not be despised. In *word* first : do we ask what "in word" means that is not included in the "conversation" ? It must mean, or at all events include amongst its most significant applications, the utterance of those messages in which your character as a minister of the word involves you : "In all utterance and in all knowledge ;" that you be careful of your whole equipment of study, learning knowledge of those to whom you speak, and of that on which you intend to speak. You have been well taught. The body to which God calls you to join yourselves to-day, the ministers of His Church, are, *as a class*, as I believe, and certainly ought to be so far as external advantages can help them to be, the best educated class of Englishmen. You have unequalled advantages in the instrument that is in your hands for being examples in "word." Study, work, an open mind, a determined will to grow in knowledge, a painful devotion to your people that you may learn to

speak to their heart, out of your heart, in which the knowledge and love of Christ is the burning and shining light—this must be, at all events, no small part of the qualification to be an example in word. Think of that, that your utterance of divine truth be not rash, childish, illogical, unreal, unready, autoschediastic, hasty, intemperate, but out of the good treasure, rightly divided, firmly and clearly stated, such that the Holy Spirit may make quick and piercing—not to be despised by believer or unbeliever.

Second, in conversation—an example of behaviour, not conformed to this world, but sufficiently in touch with it to have practical influence; a translation, by the help of the Spirit, of your Lord's life into what it would be in the circumstances and under the pressure of your own; a life of self-restraint, self-surrender, so thorough that it is almost unconscious; a conversation that becometh the Gospel, showing that you do believe the word that you preach, that you think of it and of your people first, and of yourselves only as you may do your duty best.

Third, in charity—that real embracing love, self-emptying, yet full of reality; the sympathy with your Saviour that realises sympathy with your people, not in vague aspiration nor in general altitude of design, but in definite treatment of

those you minister among, as the flesh and blood, as well as heart and mind and spirit, of men whom for the very love of Christ you know you love. No man, believer or unbeliever, friend or foe or candid critic, can mistake or despise the love which beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Fourth, in spirit—the words are omitted in the MSS. used for the revised translation of the verse, as if perhaps the cogency of example in this particular were less conceivable than in the others. Still it has its meaning, at all events where the believers are those who are to feel the importance of the type: the minister of the word and of charity is to be a leader also in that communion of spiritual devotion which is to help his people to draw near with him to their Lord in prayer and sacrament, lifting up and being lifted in heart unto the Lord. And the unbeliever may well learn that there is in spiritual life and truth, and in spiritual relations and spiritual things generally, a life, an influence, a real practical force in the affairs of men that he cannot despise, that he is very foolish if he attempts to ignore. Let him learn that the believer finds a strength in prayer, and a power and energy in the experience of the sustaining strength of the Spirit, which is as true and real and lasting and prevailing a force as

any of the cosmic or secular influences of the world, the motives, experiences, and aspirations of men who live in it and for it. Be an example in spirit, that the merest materialist, the most scientific sceptic, cannot afford to set aside as that of an enthusiast or fanatic; in power and love and in a sound mind.

Fifth, in faith; in that unflinching loyalty to the teaching of the Gospel, and that firm hold on the consequences of realised responsibility, which shall be, under God's own direct operation, the most efficacious way of holding your people in the truth, and the most certain position which your foe or critic cannot afford to despise. To hold fast the faith in its proportions, in its connections, in its integrity, in its logical consistency, in the cogency of its practical consequences; to believe, and to live as you do because you believe, and as men will recognise that you do believe, because they see you living so; giving yourself wholly to the work which in faith you undertake, knowing that by so doing you shall save both yourself and them that hear; a faith that is of loyalty, courage, sacrifice; a faith that will render an answer, not make a concession, that knows in whom it has believed, and that He who has begun will also make an end; the faith that so realises the things

hoped for that the life is lived in them and for them. Of all these prescriptions of example, surely this is the prevailing one, the victory that overcometh the world.

And yet St. Paul adds one more—in purity. The hatred of the taint, the hatred of that which taints ; the love of the pure, in which to the pure all things are pure—here, of course, as a matter of example that cannot be despised, including, I imagine, all that we mean by sincerity, veracity, singleness of heart and mind, cleanness of hand and mouth and thought. If this is a matter that calls for self-discipline in any of you, and in whom does it not ? imagine for one moment what mischief a fall from the position of example does. “Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me—then, only then, shall I teach Thy ways unto the wicked, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee.” *There* is an aspiration from the heart that has learned to acknowledge its faults and the wonderful holiness of the love against which only the sin is done : a gift of the purity of penitence, as well as of innocency ; a penitence that itself teaches how those whom we love and sorrow for may be made pure. Grant that we, having the hope of the sons of God and heirs of eternal life, may so purify ourselves, even as He is pure, that when He

shall appear again with power and great glory we may be made like unto Him in His eternal and glorious kingdom.

Well, beloved, very briefly I have run over these six prescriptions of example. Last night I spoke to you of dignity, to-night I have spoken of contempt. And now in a few hours I shall be telling you again of the dignity and importance of your office, the high dignity and the weighty office and charge, the treasure committed to you, and also the awful risks of your negligence, the horrible punishment of your laches, the greatness of your fault if you fail, with how great care and study you must beware that neither you yourselves offend nor be occasion that others offend. I would ask you to keep your hearts lifted in prayer for yourselves and for each other, that when you say your words of promise you may fully realise your purpose to keep them, and to keep them for ever, in all their expanding and developing application ; and that you may have from Him whom you are going to ask for strength, strength to do all the things that in faith in Him you are to undertake. It is but one side of the work of your lives that I have spoken of, and that one side viewed perhaps rather too exclusively from the outside ; but you know that the one life we live has its inside and its outside inextricably connected ; that the light cannot shine before men

unless it shine in the heart; and the life which we live in the flesh, as well as that which we live in the spirit, we live in the faith and by the strength of the Son of God, who died for us and lives for us now. If contempt comes on us for His sake, it is our glory; if it comes on Him, His word, His Church, His service, by our fault, it is our shame and our condemnation. In all humility, in all loyalty, in courage, sincerity, and patience, may He, the example, and sustainer, and Saviour of all that put their trust in Him, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

THE NEGATIVE SIDE OF SELF-SURRENDER

WE are familiar enough, at all events in theory, with the doctrine of self-surrender as the preliminary and pervading rule of the life of those who offer themselves for ministerial work. We recognise that it means the entire devotion, cultivation, and employment of all gifts in the service to which that offering pledges us, the offering that is of life itself in obedience to the call which is obeyed. I am not sure that we so fully realise always another side of the devotion, what I may call the negative side as opposed to or complementary of the positive side of the surrender. We know that we offer all that we are and have ; are we quite so clear what we pledge ourselves to abstain from, the measure in which we realise the forsaking all to follow Him, and the daily taking up of the cross ? Those words were, it is true, spoken of and to all disciples, and in themselves, perhaps, involve no more definite articles of covenant in the case of those who give themselves to pastoral work than in the case of the layman ; but they certainly do

involve the highest construction of those definite terms of covenant, and they are in the case of the clergyman susceptible of more direct and formal interpretation.

A young man of three-and-twenty or four-and-twenty comes and offers himself to give up certain things, conditions, rights, liberties, or the like, in the surrender of which he claims to translate into his own lot the words of the apostle, "We have left all and followed Thee." He does not fully, he cannot fully at the time count up all the cost of what he is undertaking, nor will his Master judge him according to the scale and balance of the inflexible letter, according to that he hath not, but according to that he hath. But there is no withdrawal, and the offering, once made, must itself expand with expanding experience; none of us can say to God, I shall hold back this part of my life from Thy service, or I shall retain this right and liberty for myself, from Thee, because, when I offered myself, I did not quite understand what I bound myself to do and what I bound myself not to do.

I think that it is a happy sign of the increased reality and intelligent sincerity of conscientious men in this office, that we hear of and see fewer cases in which ministerial obligations are regarded as fulfilled when the demands of professional work are

discharged. We seldom hear of the man now who is a clergyman on the Sunday, and absolutely indistinguishable from the layman on six days of the week, claiming that, having done his official duties, and being ready to fulfil such demands as may be made incidentally upon his time, he has the rest of himself to himself. I say we seldom hear or see such cases; but we do sometimes, and we do not unfrequently come across the same idea in other, more insidious, more self-deceptive forms: as, for instance, in the cases in which doubts are cherished about divine things, whilst the doubter goes on teaching as before, claiming to fulfil all his duty because he does not preach doubt; or cases in which doctrines are accepted and practices adopted which are not in accordance with the rule under which the clergyman has offered himself, and he justifies himself because so long as he does not force them on his congregation, he is exercising merely a right which belongs to himself, and no one has a right to find fault with him.

As a matter of fact, our Lord may have, and has, many rules for the clergy and laity of the various communities into which, under present circumstances, His Church is divided. The rules for the minister of the Church of England both as to form of belief and form of ritual are different, we may say, from those

under which the Assyrian or Coptic priest, not to speak of rites and rules nearer home, has in his ordination offered himself to work. Our Lord may have, has, varieties of rule and order; but the rule and order according to which He expects His servants to work, and according to their observance of which He will judge of their faithfulness, is the rule and order under which, in the day of their ordination, they have offered themselves. Into minute distinctions in these regions of debate I do not want now to take you; I adduce them merely as furnishing instances of the way in which men are now and then tempted to loose interpretations of very solemn obligations and understandings, a reserve of a right or liberty to think or do certain things, as within their liberty of dispensation, because this, that, and the other was not distinctly before their minds when they made their solemn promise before God and the congregation, contenting themselves with performing what they bound themselves to perform, and neglecting to observe that they are not abstaining from things which, it may be, they did not quite consciously realise that they were bound to abstain from, but which, logically and equitably understood, are inconsistent with what they promised.

Now this is not quite so easy a matter as at the first

sight it seems to be ; because the element of liberty is an integral element of the true and sincere devotion of offering ; and it is a poor theory and an insincere practice, that would, by strict disciplinary fetters, bind down the intellect, heart, conscience, or obedience of the man, from whom the offering of a free heart is expected or demanded. The man who declares his faith claims for that faith a free choice made between truth and falsehood ; his creed, so far as he believes it, is a creed which he accepts when it was quite within his capacity to reject it or to suspend any conclusions about it ; and, if he is to continue to believe, he must continue to be free to exercise the powers of the mind which are to determine his choice of belief as contrasted with unbelief or scepticism. In point of fact, a faith that is not free to ask questions and to choose solutions is not a real, intelligent faith. And, accordingly, the very essence of profession includes some sort of reservation to a man's self of a liberty and right to judge. We do not doubt this, although we may not improbably have some difficulty in reconciling this reservation of liberty with the completeness of the undertaking of service, or quite understanding the force of the expression *cui servire regnare est*, whose service is perfect freedom.

But, again, if we look at the matter from the

other side, the difficulty is even greater ; if our law is a law of liberty in a sense in which we are at liberty to interpret it and fulfil it just as we please, it ceases to be a law at all, and the commendation of ourselves to it, the surrender which we make when we profess to place ourselves under it, is a mere form without even a shadow of meaning, except that by undertaking it we claim to ourselves all the advantages of the position that it secures, emancipating ourselves from all the obligations that it is intended to impress.

Between the two horns of such a dilemma there must be some third, perhaps an elastic, alternative, but certainly some middle course, that will secure a distinct quantum of free choice and a distinct quantum of strict obligation. You must not now think that I am putting these things intentionally in hard words, or striving after a formula that will, because it seems alike and equally applicable to very diverse conditions, lose all cogency of meaning. I do want a formula that will be alike applicable to the moral, social, intellectual, spiritual, outer and inner life of those who take up the work that you are taking up, and offer themselves for the office that you are offering yourselves to. I do not want to put you under a straight rule : you shall not indulge in such or

such amusements; you shall keep your tongue or your eyes from such and such objects of conversation or desire; you shall not go to places where you will be tempted to imitate such and such unauthorised or forbidden practices; you shall not read books that will suggest such and such thoughts, or study sciences that will inspire doubts, or controversies that shall shake your faith and spoil the temper of your religion. I do not, I say, want to put you under such straight discipline, but can I honestly say that I think it likely that at your age and with your experience you are qualified to be each of you a law to himself in all or even in any single one of these matters?

Bear with me now if I restate the problem. You come to offer yourselves to the service of your Lord in this ministry; you give yourselves, mind, body, soul and spirit, powers and means, not only as they are now, but as by the gracious help of God you shall develop them, and you will try to develop them to the utmost; you give yourselves and yours to this service, undertaking to do certain things and to abstain from others: to hold fast the faith, to obey the rules of the Church, and to observe such social order as is agreeable to the *jus et norma* of your profession as interpreted by the highest idea. At this moment you believe the faith that you are to preach, you

heartily accept the rites and ceremonies of your prayer-book, you are quite willing to conform yourselves to the social rules that present usage lays down for clerical behaviour. But you have known instances, and you cannot shut your eyes to the possibility of something of the kind happening in your own case, instances in which men have seriously modified their relation to these things; have been induced to doubt the things that they have bound themselves to believe, and to disobey rules of worship which at their ordination satisfied them, and even to regard as lawful indulgences which at their ordination they believed that they ought to forego. Perhaps the first is the case which presents the most difficulty at the present moment; for the breach of the social obligation is both rare, and in itself, owing to the elasticity of the social rule, less a matter of conscience; whilst the breach of the ceremonial obligation as an infraction of positive law, is subject to its proper safeguards. The first is the crucial case, in which some of you, it may be, may have to determine for yourselves the concordat between liberty and loyalty. On this it is as easy to multiply commonplaces as it is difficult to frame an effective formula.

There is the doctrine of the absolute supremacy of truth and the sovereign obligation overruling

all positive engagements ; there is the doctrine of authority, the covenant to continue to believe what, on the teaching of your Church and its interpreters, on the evidence of the Bible and its expositors, you are now accepting as the truth of God. Both these principles, however, are only the generalised forms of the primary difficulties : unrestrained liberty or unqualified obedience. Even the enunciation of the middle formula, the perfection of freedom in the perfection of service, only takes one a step further and sets before us the idea of a mind which, having exercised the powers of free inquiry and unfettered judgment, has come to accept as true that which the authority of the Lord, through the Church and the Bible, has set before him, from the beginning to the end, as true. "Whose service is perfect freedom" is the result of a process of research and discipline in these matters, but it cannot by itself be regarded as a clue through the labyrinth, a prescription that will cure all defects of power or process. I am not so sure about that, if we understand our Saviour's method of making them know His will who do their best to do what He commands them ; but in our present questioning we may let the conclusion provisionally stand.

You have got the three factors of the problem : the supreme claim of truth with the duty of

searching for it; the supreme claim of authority with the duty of realising it; the ideal *ἐντελέχεια*, in the union of truth and authority, in the conviction and acceptance of the truth so defined, realised, and loved. It does not seriously matter that at this point we should remember that neither the truth as we are capable of realising it, nor the authority as we are able to test it, can be defined as absolute; for such truth and such authority we have to wait until that which is perfect is come. The truth as we can deal with it is that amount which, with our present powers, we can attain to, and the authority is that which, with our present conviction of evidence and our present purpose of obedience, we offer to submit ourselves to. The relations between the terms of our question are the same; and until that which is perfect is come the problem, or the theorem, I should rather say, is insoluble.

But the very fact that it is as a theorem insoluble throws us back on the question, What is to be done? If we are to wait for the solution of that which is now insoluble, we must be content to suspend not only thought, not only inquiry, not only research, but action also; all religion and all that depends on religious sanction would be at a standstill, and what would be the use of a world, or the future of a Church, of which such would be the normal condi-

tion, and would have been the actual condition now, if the grace of God had not found for us a remedy in action? What we are asking for is a prescription for ourselves; am I to abstain from inquiry? surely not; am I unreservedly to accept what asserts itself to be authority? well, if you do, your acceptance is a matter of very little practical or intellectual value, for without trying to understand it, and without proving its meaning, you will find that the process is a merely mechanical contrivance, with no quickening or stimulating energy. You are bidden by the authority itself to prove all things.

Is not the conclusion of the whole matter to be found in the unreserved committal of yourself to the divine guidance, sought and found in prayer; inquiry to be carried on in the attitude and voice and power of prayer; the earnest desire to find the Way, the Truth, and the Life; to be kept from self-confidence and from the temptation into the myriad ways of self-delusion; to be guided in that obedience to which the promise of fuller knowledge is secured, to the realising of that power of the Truth which, making you free, shall certify and prove to you that you are free indeed, and so qualified to offer a service, a surrender, an acceptance which shall be the tribute of a willing heart? Prayer for guidance; the attitude of devout acceptance; the patient waiting for the certainty

which is as yet withheld—this seems to me to go nearest of all prescriptions to a practical solving of our difficulty. It is a prescription that falls into very few words ; but so far as we can at present see, it is the conclusion of the whole matter. When He the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all Truth. There is some part of that as a prophecy which yet needs fulfilment, but none as a promise. Seek the guidance of the Spirit in prayer, and wait patiently as He guides you ; slowly, for you could bear no hurrying, and you have need to realise each step as you take it. He sets no other restraint on your liberty than that your love should accompany and complete with active endeavour every step of your growth into the knowledge of God.

A CASTAWAY

Lest that by any means when I have preached to others I myself should be a castaway.—I COR. ix. 27.

Is it possible? Is it reasonable? Is it conceivable that the great apostle should be a castaway? Is it possible or reasonable or conceivable that he should really contemplate the possibility of being rejected by the Lord who had used him for the work He had used him for? Do the words he employs look as if he meant them to illustrate an extreme case of supposition? surely they imply no misgiving; surely they imply nothing more than the words he uses in another place where also he is adopting a metaphor from the games and says that he counts not himself to have apprehended. They do imply the need of sustained energy, of unreleased, unremitting discipline; the persistent exercise of the athlete, the unflinching perseverance of the trained runner; and in such implication they cannot but include the possibility of overstraining, the breakdown by weariness, the failure of the heart's action, the fainting and bewildering of the taxed brain; but

surely not the failure of the will, surely nothing that would involve rejection by the Judge of the great competition. A castaway! What can it mean? That he can fall from faith in the Lord who showed Himself to him on that strange journey from Jerusalem to Damascus in such sort as, next to the scene on Calvary and in Joseph's garden, more than anything that ever happened, changed the face of the world, and wrested round the course of human nature! That he can think of himself as falling from that faith seems impossible. Are we to regard it as a hyperbole, *i.e.* so far as our teaching goes, something like the calling himself a wretched man, imploring to be delivered from the body of this death? Or is it a sign that he like us was very sensitive to changes of frame and feeling; and that on him as on us discouragements sometimes have more than their lawful, reasonable effect; that his view of the great truth for which he was living and dying was sometimes clouded; that sometimes he found himself thinking, If I believed all this to be as true as I think I believe it, would not life be more liveable for me?

I do not think that we ever realise St. Paul crying out in David's words, "Lord, why art Thou absent from us so long?" or "Hide not Thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit." And yet they are words that express very

distinctly our own feeling sometimes. And this awakes a strain of thought that we may dwell on shortly to some purpose; whatever was the clue to the apostle's extremity of hypothesis as to his being rejected as a failure, we want no clue to the adapting of the words to ourselves. We may be sure that he was not rejected or likely to be, but how about us? How about us as ministers of God, or offering ourselves for such service? How about our strain, and our discipline, and our hearts' action, and our bewilderment, and our little faith; how about the frames and feelings, the thoughts of trial that come on sleepless nights, and unprofitable efforts after prayer, and the cloudings of a faith never very clear sighted, and the discouragement of designs never quite whole hearted, and the dispelling of energies never quite concentrated? There are times when each or all of these trials come to the servant of God; sometimes even a question whether he is a servant of God at all, or even whether there is a God to serve. Can we bear to look this trouble in the face? Having preached as I have done to others, can I be a castaway? rejected, not because I have not done all that I should have done or might have done, or would have done, but because I have been working on a hypothesis altogether worthless, fighting as one

that beateth the air, running as uncertainly, making my life an offering which not even the vast love that will look on things that are not as though they are, can save from the doom of absolute nothingness.

Of course I cannot, nor I think can any man, undertake to interpret the experience of others; but I think that there must come to all those who are trying to do their work well times of such depression as makes them inclined to use the apostle's sad word as a possible description of themselves. It may be a temptation from which we may pray for a way to escape; it may be a messenger of Satan to buffet us; it may be a physical rather than a spiritual discomfiture, or something that combines all, or something that is outside all; a weakness of faith, chronic or critical, a clouding of the sight, organic imperfection within, or mist and darkness without; but I think that it comes to most men, and I think that it will come to you, perhaps most vividly and discouragingly to the most sanguine; with strange inconsistency to the most thoughtful; sometimes with a numbing and paralysing effect in the midst of most active work; by no means the most frequently, as we might imagine, to the high-strung and emotional nature, often and often to the man who, knowing how hard it is to enter into the disposing counsels of God, contents him-

self with working on the principle, Behold the servant of the Lord, be it unto me according to Thy word; I will overcome thought, in Thy strength by work, and trust to learn more of Thy will by doing what I know of it now with all my heart.

Let us look now at one or two of these trying conditions, in the form of which we range our own experience of misgiving. One of the commonest, perhaps, is this : a doubt about the reality of our own ministrations; not, mark you, the validity or even the sincerity, but the reality. Take preaching for the example as the function into which most individuality comes, and in which there is the greatest risk of God's work being disparaged by our weakness. We make our sermons carefully, write or compose them with the utmost accuracy of doctrine and the most telling array of argument, the most urgent directness of application; that is, we try to do it. We do not doubt one step or link of the argument. We have chapter and verse for every statement, our application is meant to draw its urgency from our own experience of ourselves or in dealing with others. When the time comes for preaching the sermon so prepared, or after it has been preached, the thought comes to us : Well, as a theme or a dissertation, an exercise or an exhortation, I know

that all that I am saying is true, but whilst I speak my heart smites me, and when I have spoken it smites me harder still. I am not sure that when I was urging conviction of sin I felt what I was saying; I am not sure that when I was exhorting to the love of God I was conscious of the love that ought to have been burning within me; I am not sure that when I was laying down the doctrine of the working of the Spirit in the heart it was indeed the leading thought with me. No, I was not thinking of my own cleverness or eloquence, as you might suspect; I was not trying to remember what came next in my notes; I was not trying to eke out the lapse of thought by loud and impassioned words; I was saying what I had prepared to say, and what I meant to say, but (although it was clear to me when I wrote that what I wrote was only the truth) the sense of the reality was not on me when I spoke; can it be that preaching to others I myself am shut out?

Or, take another instance: we all know the value of public prayer; we prize our prayer-book above all other books of human composition; we desire the things that we daily pray for, earnestly and sincerely desire them, and we go to church to say them, not as a mere form, but as a solemn enunciation of feelings and desires,

penitences and aspirations, which in our daily work of life we are trying to realise in ourselves and for others. Yet how often are we obliged to confess that, whilst with solemnity and sincerity we are doing what with determined purpose we came to do, and saying that which in our habitual condition of mind and heart we know to be true, very often at the very time of saying our thoughts are far from the words we are uttering, and our prayers in danger of becoming, if God were to judge them at the time, a sacrifice of fools, no more real than the paper prayers which the Tibetan lamas reel off their little windmills on the hillsides. If they are unreal to us, what are they to our people? having led them to the throne of grace, are we to stand aside and, not remembering that we are on holy ground, forgetting our wedding-garment, be cast into the outer darkness of prayerless life?

Now, take another and quite different sort of misery. There are times of reaction after overwork—times when a clergyman, for instance, having gone on too long without resting, finds himself pulled up with a sense that he has nothing to do—quite irrespective, mind you, of what there may be to be done, or of what, if he had not exhausted himself, he might have readily found to his hand; but he finds himself off the groove and his energy worn

out, whilst every nerve and fibre are quivering with the strain that has exhausted the energy. He is miserable because he thinks that he has nothing to do. Well, sometimes, perhaps very often, this is a misery physical rather than moral or religious, but it is not less oppressive, perhaps it is more oppressive, for all that: I am wasting the time that ought to be given to God's work; if the pressure of confirmation classes is relaxed, there ought to be sermon work to be got on with; but I cannot do it, my thoughts are all confused; I cannot settle down to reading; my people are busy in the harvest field, I am left idle—and my idleness is a sin. God frowns on me for being idle and unoccupied.

Well, I have often thought that when an honest working clergyman honestly thinks himself unhappy at having nothing to do, it is an effort of nature hinting to him that he ought to be taking a spell of rest; and that Divine Providence does so arrange the lot of some of us that we should have such reminders. But they are not pleasant reminders, and the oppression is hard to bear until things get themselves into their right place again, and nerve and brain are a little recruited. Things physical and things spiritual are strangely interwoven, nerve and brain are God's mechanism as well as soul and spirit, and without them soul and spirit

cannot work or realise their own existence even, much less bring the consciousness of life before either God in prayer or before man in work and thought.

And now turn to the most terrible of all these considerations : sometimes the thought comes, Do I believe at all in God, and what hold have I on a God to believe in ? I who am a minister of Christ, preaching what is said to be His word, guiding my people to what is said to be His ear. Do I believe ? is there a God to believe in ? is my life real or only professional ? Am I quite sure ? Surely I believe, or why should this thought make me uncomfortable. If I did not believe, why should I have any fear of being a castaway ? I am no hypocrite, and if I were, whom can I be trying to deceive ? Not my people, I am sure, for for what earthly purpose could I be trying to teach them what I do not believe ? I blush for shame at the very idea that it is to strengthen the hold on them of an influence which I believe to be superstitious and false. Am I deceiving myself ? surely I am trying to undeceive myself, to realise my own state and my own difficulties. Can it be God that I am trying to deceive ? Yet the very question implies that I believe in a God. Is the solution to be, I only half believe ; I believe that there may be a God and a Christ and a Church, and it is as

well to be on the safe side in case that possibility should turn out to be a fact. Yet if there be a God and a Christ and a Church, such a hedging would seem to them to be the merest gambling, a mockery of the most desperate sort, in comparison with which downright honest agnosticism would be a better policy. "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief," is indeed the appeal for remedy against this whole frame of thought, but there are times of thick clouding and dark mountains for stumbling feet, and an hour of temptation, and a heart condemning; and there is for it all only the assurance of His love, who is greater than our heart and knoweth all things.

Now let us put by these things and look higher. When we are in our right mind we have no misgivings about God, the Father, Son, and Spirit. We may have misgivings about ourselves, none about Him. If we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him; if we suffer we shall also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us; if we believe not, yet He abideth faithful, He cannot deny Himself. We have no doubt about Him. Nor have we any doubt that He is greater than our condemning heart and knoweth all things; knowing what are our powers and our needs, our purposes, our weaknesses, our intention, and our failure; knowing also our temptation, for was not He tempted;

and our sense of desolation in disheartenment, for were not his words, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*? We have no distrust of Him, or His knowledge of us, or His love of us. Why should our trial lie so much in self-inspection? How does He bid us assure our hearts before Him? It is surely by that love of Him which finds its natural outlet in work. The work of love mastering the misgivings of an exhausted, or a fainting, or an over-excited, over-tasked heart. He is the judge; if we know nothing by ourselves we are not therefore justified; it is in obedience that we win our way to the reality of knowledge, and the work of obedient love is within the compass of the desire of every heart that cares at all. Work is the great substantial remedy for self-torture! love is the certain and unshaken hold on the assurance of the heart before Him. Man at his best and in his strongest is a creature of frames and feelings; He who knows what is in man is the faithful, strong, and patient judge. We pray when we can; but we may work even when we can hardly pray; and we can pray when we find that we cannot work.

I put these things before you as a warning of things that may, and will come to you, against which I can give you no prophylactic; it cannot be but that you, like us older ones, should be tried.

He continueth faithful ; and when the temptation comes makes ever a way to escape, and guides the eyes of those that look to Him to find that way. He will guide yours. God forbid that you should find in my words of warning a single note of discouragement, a single note of unpractical caution. We do well sometimes to take stock of ourselves, our reserve of strength, our store of ideas, our preachable sermons, our diligence in visiting, our development and diversification of study. We know that a measure of change, and a measure of rest, are conditions of useful or happy work. We do wisely to vary our work within the circle of practical usefulness and reasonable happiness. We are bound to work and pray for the guidance that will prevent us from wasting energy or letting power lie idle. But we must not shut our eyes against the openings for the risks and temptations, the exhaustions and trials, of which I have been speaking. You come to Him ; you cannot come except the Father who hath sent Him draw you ; you give yourselves to Him, the Father hath given you to Him. So long as you do not withdraw yourselves from Him, no man plucketh you out of His hand : the disposal of the lot is with the Lord ; He will not let you be cast away.

ST. THOMAS

And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God.—ST. JOHN xx. 28.

IT is no unsuggestive or uninstructional accident that St. Thomas's Day so often falls in the Ember week, and is used for the day of Ordination. In very grateful humility, those who are called to-day to the work of the ministry recognise that they are entering on a share of the work of apostleship—of the office of witness of the Resurrection about which St. Thomas, for the more confirmation of the faith, was suffered to be doubtful, and was blessed with an answer that set all his doubts at rest. Most humbly do we claim, but also most confidently, in the faith of Him who has called and is calling us, to be such witnesses of truth, witnesses of a living creed, of a living body, of a living union between the head and the body, the whole idea and realisation of which rests on the evidence of that Resurrection. Not indeed that we can say that we have seen the Christ risen according to the flesh, but we can say that we know ourselves called to testify to a work and

doctrine ; by a commission from hand to hand ; with a mission the continuity and integrity of which starts from the same Upper Chamber where the apostle saw and touched the print of the nails in the hands and feet, and the mark of the spear in the side of the Lord, crucified and risen.

It is not, however, with reference to the evidential character of the event that the festival recalls that I want to speak to you this morning ; rather it is to the subjective side of the story, the mind of the apostle, in its waverings and in its convictions. It has some certain lessons for us, diverse as are, no doubt, our temperaments, and varied as our temptations to doubt may be. Perhaps, also, we may light upon some wider lessons still, and find, in our attempts to grasp the apostle's case, some more cogent confirmation of our personal hold on the truth of truths.

For just a moment let us look back at the passages in which St. John has characterised for us his brother apostle. "Whither I go ye know," our Lord says, "and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto Him, Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way ?" Again : "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth" ; "Lazarus is dead . . . nevertheless let us go unto him." "Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die

with Him." In the first of the passages there is a blunt, flat contradiction of our Lord's words just spoken, that is in curious contrast to the enthusiasm of St. Peter in his profession: "Lord, why cannot I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thy sake." In the latter passage likewise, there is a sound that reminds us of St. Peter: "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." It would perhaps be the natural thing to say that the passages both show what we should call, in common men, a want of imagination; at all events, a want of such power of realising the unseen as is indispensable to enthusiasm, whilst notwithstanding there is a devotion of love that seems almost the more precious for the lack of imagination. It would be too harsh to call this a lack of faith; it is rather the somewhat puzzled condition of a very matter-of-fact mind groping after some heroic effort, but for the time unable to realise how what is wanted can be done.

And I think that these passages throw some light on the great critical incidents of St. Thomas's trial. "Except I see the print of the nails in His hands and feet, and thrust my hands into His side, I will not believe." Most certainly our Lord saw in those words something very different from what He saw in those to whom He said, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe";

or, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it." He remembered the depressed, unhopeful, unimaginative frame of mind which had seen, in the accompanying Him to the tomb of Lazarus, a pilgrimage to end in being stoned, and yet was willing to face it. He remembered the love that spoke in the blunt, flat contradiction, "How can we know the way?" as if there were no question but that, if the way were known, it would be taken. He gave to the devotion of the despairing apostle a proof and answer that not his faith, but his love, justified, and crowned his exceptional favour with the grace that witnessed a good confession, "My Lord and my God."

It seems to me that this incapacity to realise something which he must have longingly desired to be true, was the feeling which we are accustomed, in the language of the Collect, to call doubt, although we may observe that St. John does not so describe the feeling or attitude of St. Thomas; and, if it was so, we can see what sort of doubts the Lord is likely to answer in such wise.

And I think that we may also be able to put a satisfactory interpretation on the words of our own poet, which are so often quoted, as I fear, for a very different sort of argument: "There

lives more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in half the creeds"; that is, a man may be disquieted with doubts because he believes so much, and cannot rest under the uncertainty as to what he desires, but cannot see his way to believe; and so his doubt and the discomfort it gives him are a proof of more substantive faith than the cursory, superficial acceptance of formulas that men take no pains to realise. Honest doubt is a very different thing from determined unbelief; indeed, honest doubt must believe somewhat before it has the material to doubt on. The comparison is unfair, no doubt. We cannot compare fairly a mental attitude with a formula of belief, and neither can we fairly balance an honest doubt with a dishonest profession; the germ, however, of truth that is in the line is what I have stated, and so stated it is a real and valuable truth, which we have great need to take note of in these our days of trial. Let as many as be perfect be thus minded, and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, pressing towards the mark, God shall reveal even this unto you. This, however, by the way.

Supposing what I have said to be a true theory, the case of St. Thomas will stand in the strongest contrast with that of St. Paul. St. Thomas failed to overcome a mental obstacle to the acceptance of a truth which he must have desired to find true;

St. Paul was arrested and made to believe, in the very midst of a proceeding intended to be the proof and exhibition of a violent hostility to the doctrine in which now he was made to believe. St. Paul, judging from the account of St. Luke, and his own narration of the conversion, was in no state of doubt ; he was a determined and sincere disbeliever, persecuting and hating : there is no trace or confession of misgiving, or any sign of apology beyond the fact that he believed that he was doing God service. That the Saviour vouchsafed to two such different cases an exceptional measure of conversion and conviction, is a proof of His marvellous condescension, of the manifold wisdom, the *πολυποίκιλος σοφία*, with which he meets the manifold perversity of men's minds, seeing not as we see, and yet seeing how we see, and dealing with things that are not as if they are.

Take another illustration, commonly enough adduced in relation to these things—the altar erected to the Unknown God by the too superstitious Athenians. We do not know whether this altar was erected out of a desire to avert the hostility of a spiritual agency that might possibly exist and possibly be hostile, or to express a devotion towards an unseen and unknown divinity whose existence might be calculated on in the way that the astronomers calculate on the existence of

an undiscovered planet. Either way, there is an idea that it is safer to accept than to reject the unknown : a sort of profession—if there be such a God, we will worship Him ; if not, there is no harm done. But there may be a better and higher aspiration, after a better and higher Deity than any of the mythologic hierarchy—the idea and desire of One who must *be*, unknown though He might be, who must exist unless all the highest instincts of humanity and philosophy were alike destined to most cruel disappointment. It may well be that St. Paul, when he declared himself the herald of Him whom they ignorantly worshipped, recognised such an instinct towards truth and beauty and good ; and it is certainly by a most curious and perverse appropriation of the word “unknown” that the term has been evolved which now designates a special form of doubt, a mental attitude that does not care enough about the thing it doubts to try to come to any resolution for or against belief : we know not and we do not care to risk anything on the possibility that that which we ignore may be true.

Well, I must not waste your time ; how do these things touch us, and how do they specially touch us now in this solemn hour of profession and resolution ? Are the witnesses of the Resurrection likely to be the last people troubled with doubts or misgivings or difficulties arising from the limitations of the

known and the knowable, or the questions of the whither and the way, and the nature of the proof possibly to be vouchsafed to the groping hands or to the half-blinded eyes? Surely we are not the last to be so tempted. Surely to us come the trials, it may be the most piercing experiences of the trials, through which we are commissioned to try to guide our brothers. God help us, if the blind lead the blind.

I said that I should not touch the evidential side of St. Thomas's story, only the subjective. I cannot, and indeed I need not in this connection, attempt to define points of doubt and methods of meeting them which depend on the exercise of purely intellectual judgment and research. The main question in the matter, as I am looking at it, is, Do you or do you not wish to find the things which you are taught to believe, and about which you yet have misgivings; do you wish to find them true; do you wish them to be true; and are you willing to take the means by which those who find them true have come to the conclusion that they are true? St. Thomas is ready to take the way as soon as he knows it; he will go with his Lord to the tomb of Lazarus, even if it be to die with Him; although he will not believe unless he see the print of the nails and thrust his hand into the wounded side, he yet does not hold back, but goes to the

Upper Chamber where, as he has been told that his Lord has appeared to the rest, there is just a possibility that He may appear again. You see, he is willing to act on the chance of a possibility, although he does not see his way to believe. Do we wish to believe, and to have our doubt settled in more belief? What says our Lord to this? If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God. And what is the sentence of the heathen mind in its highest grasp after divine things, clogged as it is by fatalism and dark ignorance? I will ask you to pardon my use of such an illustration, but I think it is also a groping after light, which our own poet, in the hymn, "Lead, Kindly Light," has taught us must be sought for by careful and even unreasoning pursuit, if it is ever to shine unto the perfect day. I will read the four lines of Cleanthes which are preserved by Epictetus, and which Seneca gives in the Latin version—

*"Ἄγου δέ μ' ὦ Ζεῦ, καὶ σὺ γ' ἡ πεπρωμένη
 ὁποι ποθ' ὑμῖν εἰμι διατεταγμένος,
 ὥς ἔψομαι γ' ἄοκνος· ἦν δὲ μὴ θέλω,
 κακὸς γενόμενος οὐδὲν ἥττον ἔψομαι.*

Let me translate it into Christian thought :

"Lead me, Almighty Father, Spirit, Son,
 Whither Thou wilt—I follow—no delay.
 My will is Thine, and, even had I none,
 Grudging obedience, still I will obey :

Faint-hearted, fearful, doubtful if I be,
Gladly or sadly, I will follow Thee.

Into the land of righteousness I go,
The footsteps thither Thine and not my own ;
Jesu, Thyself the way, alone I know ;
Thy will be mine, for other have I none :
Unprofitable servant though I be,
Gladly or sadly, let me follow Thee."

Surely the motive is the same—

" I do not ask to see
The distant scene ; one step enough for me."

Again, if ye be otherwise minded, do what you have to do, and God shall reveal even this. This is a very different thing from smothering the doubt or misgiving ; it is a very different thing from suspending belief until that which was unknown or unknowable becomes known and intelligible ; it is a different thing from saying, " God will not expect me to risk both worlds on the admission or rejection of something that He does not vouchsafe to prove."

In our dealings with other men's doubts, as with our own, this has to be kept in sight first and throughout. Misgivings will come, fresh evidence will not come. Misgivings will come, and faith has to supply the evidence of the things not seen, but it must be by the experience of faith proving what has been believed by acting upon it, not by a presumption of faith speculating on that for which it has no promise.

There are reasonable misgivings, just as there are regions of the unrevealed within which faith itself has no effectual passport. We know what we have believed, and what we are asked to believe, and what should be the operation in fact that should result from the operation of faith: "If any man will do His will, he shall know the doctrine."

I know how I am open to a quick retort; if this is all, what does it all come to? But I answer, this is not all nor anything like all. We are speaking of St. Thomas, and not of St. Paul; yet could St. Paul, after that great and wonderful conversion in which, one might almost say, the world's history itself was wrested round, find a more excellent way? Trembling and astonished, blinded by the vision of the Lord Christ, "What wilt Thou have me to do?" is the first utterance of the turned heart. And all the revelation that follows is the revelation to the willing heart. He obeys, and the further revelation comes.

Beloved, I have no doubt that you have thought about these things before, and some way realised the practical contradiction between the spirit of a man who says, "I will try to believe and worship," and the spirit of the man who says, "I will not believe until I know"—the man who wishes to believe, the man who wishes not to believe, and the man who does not entertain any wish at all,

but is content with the practical negation, "I do not care enough about the things that faith and unbelief deal with, to risk anything that I have, or may have, either way." Why, indeed, should we care? Yet there are things in life that no such agnostic, invulnerable, impenetrable hardness or hardihood can bid defiance to; there is conscience, there is love, and there is death—the last not to be gainsaid or averted. So long as men have to look within and there find sin; so long as they can look outside and find what life is worth living for—well, they may drown conscience and they may stay love; but for fear of death they are all their lifetime subject to bondage. And that fear will not be satisfied with sullen acquiescence. But let us not speak of unbelief now.

Need I add a word about prayer; the feeling for the guidance of the will of the Spirit, by which will we are trying to work; the feeling for the strengthening of the desire of obedience, and of the power of obeying? He will guide; He will strengthen; He will with every temptation make a way to escape; with every trial of doubt or misgiving He will provide a method of solution, or strength to bear up against the question, or to face it, or to answer it. But that help is all the more effectual and all the more conducive to growth and safety if it be asked for with an intelligent heart, letting

your desires be made known unto God. Help us He will in a thousand ways, where He sees the willing mind, ignorant as the willing mind may be both of its needs and of the ways in which He helps them; but surely, in the opening of the heart to Him, and in the seeking or the self-knowledge in which we realise that we have somewhat to tell Him, lies the blessing of the free heart. Beloved, surely we, here and now, have no doubt or misgiving about Him. "Lord, we believe; help Thou our unbelief," is the predominant feeling. It is about ourselves that our doubts circle, and on our own faith that they concentrate. Give us the blessing, O Lord, of those who, having not seen, have yet believed; and striving to believe, do their best to find the experience of faith in loving obedience.

THE END

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